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REVIEW OF SECTORAL CLUSTERS

Report of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests on its second session

(Geneva, 11-22 March 1996)

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I. MATTERS CALLING FOR ACTION

Draft decision

1. The Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests recommends to the Economic and Social Council through the Commission on Sustainable Development, the adoption of the following draft decision:

Matters relating to the third and fourth sessions of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests

The Economic and Social Council approves:

(a) The request of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests to hold its third session in Geneva from 9 to 20 September 1996 and to hold its fourth session in New York for a period of two weeks in 1997;

(b) The Panel's request that provision be made so that the two sessional working groups it intends to establish during its third and fourth sessions, as originally envisaged at its first session, can meet simultaneously.

II. MATTERS BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Decision

2. The following decision adopted by the Panel is brought to the attention of the Commission on Sustainable Development:

Additional voluntary contributions to the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests

The Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests expresses its appreciation to those Governments and organizations that made generous voluntary contributions to support the work of the Panel and of its secretariat and, bearing in mind the fact that its work, as envisaged by the Commission on Sustainable Development and the Economic and Social Council, largely depends on the provision of extrabudgetary resources, invites all interested Governments and organizations to consider supporting the Panel with additional voluntary contributions.

III. INTRODUCTION

3. In accordance with the programme of work agreed upon at its first session (E/CN.17/IPF/1995/3), the Panel at its second session addressed two types of issues. A number of programme elements included in the Panel's terms of reference, namely elements I.2, I.4, I.5, II, and III.1 (a) and (b) were subject to a substantive discussion. Other programme elements (I.1, I.3, III.2, IV, and V.1) were subject only to an initial consideration.

4. The final report of the Panel, containing its recommendations and proposals for action relating to all of the programme elements included in its terms of reference, will be agreed at the Panel's fourth session. This final report will be submitted for consideration by the Commission on Sustainable Development at its fifth session, in 1997.

Programme elements that were discussed substantively

5. The present report includes the Co-Chairmen's summaries of the discussion on the elements under consideration. These summaries have not been subject to negotiation. They are transitional in nature, and the elements that have been put forward for substantive discussion at the second session of the Panel will remain open and start to be negotiated at the third session of the Panel. The summaries do not fully reflect the views of the Group of 77 and China, or, indeed, those of any other group or delegation.

6. Furthermore, they will be supplemented by suggestions for possible recommendations and proposals for action under those programme elements that are to be subject to substantive consideration during the third session of the Panel. This would allow the Panel at its fourth session to consider, in an integrated manner, recommendations and proposals for action emanating from both its second and its third session and, on that basis, to consider programme element V.2 of its work programme, as well as to adopt its final report.

Programme elements that were discussed initially

7. Provisions in this report relating to these programme elements represent a list of the views expressed and proposals made by various delegations during the session in connection with the preparations for a substantive discussion of the elements during the Panel's third session.

IV. CO-CHAIRMEN'S SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSION

A. Programme elements that were discussed substantively

1. Underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation (programme element I.2)

8. The Panel considered the report of the Secretary-General on programme element 1.2, contained in document E/CN.17/IPF/1996/2, taking into account the relevant paragraphs of the Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests (Forest Principles) 1/ and chapter 11 of Agenda 21. 2/ The report provided material that could be relevant to many of the other programme elements.

9. The Panel noted that the causes of deforestation and forest degradation were complex and that simplistic conclusions and overgeneralized solutions must be avoided. Many of the factors causing deforestation or forest degradation interact and some are synergistic. Many lie outside the forest sector, while others, such as unsustainable timber extraction, are linked to the forest sector

itself. Most of the factors are social and economic in character. Inappropriate policy choices and approaches in other sectors can influence deforestation and forest degradation. Poverty and consumption patterns as well as land speculation and land markets may also have a major influence on deforestation.

10. The Panel considered that tenure issues had an important effect on access to, and use of, trees, forest products and forest services. The demand for fuelwood and charcoal to meet basic energy needs also contributes to deforestation and forest degradation. Grazing pressure, unsustainable agriculture, and forest fires are important factors in many regions. In this context, the Panel noted that there were cases where major land areas under forest cover lay outside the direct control of national forest authorities.

11. Many factors mentioned above operate at regional or wider international levels. The Panel felt that long-term changes in consumption and production patterns in different parts of the world were important and could have both positive and negative effects on the sustainable management and use of forests. Their forestry-specific ramifications should be revisited at the next session in the context of the work being done by the Commission on Sustainable Development as well as of the initiative sponsored by Norway on long-term supply and demand for forest products.

12. The Panel considered that international underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation, including transboundary economic forces as well as transboundary pollution, were important and needed to be further analysed. Factors such as international trade, structural adjustment programmes and external debt could indirectly influence deforestation. Market forces and relative prices, as well as undervaluation of wood and non-wood forest products, have a direct bearing on sustainable management of all types of forests. Dealing with deforestation and forest degradation therefore often requires changes in policies and plans in other sectors.

13. Forests are vital national resources and the Panel encouraged the development of national forest action plans and national forest programmes, which needed to be integrated with other national policies, plans and programmes. Different countries have different forest requirements, affecting both the area and the nature of their forests, and these requirements change over time. The benefits and disbenefits of different types of forest, including forest plantations, need to be appraised in different social, cultural, economic and ecological contexts. The Panel emphasized that there were rational justifications for many changes in forest structure and cover and that deforestation did not necessarily need to be harmful if planned within national policy frameworks for sustainable land use. It was recognized that sustainable management and use of both natural forests and forest plantations, as part of an integrated land-use plan taking into account relevant environmental and socio-economic concerns, fulfilled a valuable role in helping to meet the need for forest products and services as well as to conserve biological diversity. Quality aspects are as important as quantitative measures of forest extent in determining national forest cover. In addition to the economic value of wood forest products, non-wood forest products and the social, economic and

environmental services that forests provide need to be valued and recognized as well.

14. A diagnostic framework to assist countries in identifying the causes of deforestation and degradation that are most significant to them would be useful and should be developed as an aid to effective remedial action.

15. Joint management (where applicable), participatory approaches involving all relevant parties (especially local people) in decision-making, benefit-sharing, and the adjustment of management processes to reflect different economic, social and ecological circumstances can constitute useful ingredients of national action. Policy options for sustainable forest management and effective implementation need to be further defined. The possible benefits of ecoregional approaches to land use and forest planning should also be considered.

16. A number of international legal instruments, inter alia, the Convention on Biological Diversity, 3/ the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 4/ and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, 5/ address issues highly pertinent to the management and sustainable use of forest resources. Coordination of the work programmes being implemented under these conventions is essential for achieving the forest-related objectives of Agenda 21 and the Forest Principles.

17. In addition, the Panel recognized that actions to deal with undesirable forms of deforestation were required at the international, regional, national and local levels.

18. The Panel highlighted the following points and actions:

(a) Developed countries should be encouraged to assist developing countries in undertaking case-studies using the "diagnostic framework" described in section III of the report mentioned in paragraph 8 above in order to identify the sequence of causes contributing to changes in the quantity and quality of their forests and to focus attention on where action might be most effective in halting damage and promoting beneficial change. This could largely be based on existing information. The main purpose of these case-studies should be to develop a set of possible options and approaches that might be appropriate for addressing underlying causes, as well as to identify corrective action, and plan for the future. In addition, they could also serve as a means of refining the diagnostic tool, and of achieving the sharing of experiences between countries. In this context, the use of ongoing arrangements, particularly at the regional level, for sharing experiences and for providing forums for policy debate would be useful;

(b) In order to evaluate the significance of changes in forest cover, countries should be encouraged to assess the quantity and quality of forest required to provide the full range of benefits, goods and services needed to fulfil the needs of society now and in the future. These will include many different types of forest, including natural forests, plantations and trees outside forests. Such an analysis should involve all relevant parties. It should examine both quantitative and qualitative aspects of forest, including

biological diversity, and consider forest strategies in relation to developments in other sectors of the economy, for example, those relating to poverty alleviation, infrastructure development, agriculture and energy, and also take into account possible impacts on neighbouring countries and the environment as a whole;

(c) Accurate and updated information, including data on changes in the quantity and quality of forest cover and land use should be collected and synthesized. Useful data may already exist and these should be used where possible. Gaps in information about qualitative aspects of forest cover should be addressed. The data on forest modification and replacement should be based on databases that are easily accessible and regularly updated;

(d) Capacity-building activities should be supported in terms not only of the formulation of strategies and action plans but also of their implementation, including the formulation and effective implementation of codes of practice. Special attention should also be given to rationalizing and strengthening administrative structures and mechanisms, improving proper planning, management and, in particular, developing and implementing national programmes for sustainable forest management, including emerging participatory management systems;

(e) Donor coordination and international collaboration should be improved, in programmes addressing deforestation and forest degradation;

(f) Participatory approaches and mechanisms should be encouraged for ensuring active involvement of all relevant parties in the review of policies and legislation. Consultations with actors from other economic sectors should be encouraged as part of the process of identifying the underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation and possible solutions, as appropriate, in each country;

(g) Examples of policies and interventions that had contributed to deforestation, as well as those that had promoted sustainable forest management, with respect to providing specific information on what had proved to be effective or otherwise, should be identified;

(h) Inappropriate policy incentives within the forest sector (and also in some countries inappropriate policies outside the forest sector), including land-use aspects and the need for land reform should be corrected;

(i) Adequate legislation and other measures, including environmental impact assessments, should be promoted, as a basis for action against uncontrolled conversion to other types of land uses.

19. The Panel requested its secretariat, in the course of its preparations for the discussions at the third session of the Panel as well as for the final consideration at the Panel's fourth session, to take into account the underlying causes of deforestation as the basis for action on each of the other relevant programme elements of its programme of work. Government-sponsored initiatives under way in support of this programme element, taking full account of paragraphs 15 and 16 of the report of the Panel on its first session, as well as

relevant activities undertaken under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, should also be considered.

2. Fragile ecosystems affected by desertification and the impact of airborne pollution on forests (programme element I.4)

20. The Panel considered the report of the Secretary-General on programme element I.4 contained in document E/CN.17/IPF/1996/3, taking into account the relevant paragraphs of the Forest Principles and chapter 11 of Agenda 21. That report is divided into two parts reflecting the different nature of the issues contained in the mandate of the Commission on Sustainable Development and the instructions provided in the report of the Panel on its first session (E/CN.17/IPF/1995/3). The Panel first discussed issues related to fragile ecosystems affected by desertification and the effects of drought followed by issues related to the impact of airborne pollution on forests.

Fragile ecosystems affected by desertification and drought

21. The Panel emphasized that desertification and the effects of drought are widespread phenomena affecting forests and other wooded land in arid, semi-arid and sub-humid regions. Desertification and drought are problems of global dimension in that they affect all regions of the world and that joint action of the international community is needed to combat desertification and/or mitigate the effects of drought.

22. The Panel felt that this programme element should be carried forward in close relationship with existing international conventions such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and, in particular, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa. The work carried out in the conventions should not determine the work of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests, but rather complement and enhance it in the context of sustainable forest development.

23. Forest-related action aimed at combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought should address the underlying causes of these phenomena in an integrated manner, and consider the role of poverty, migration, refugees, land-use planning and policies, food security, and provision of fodder and fuelwood, among many other economic, social and cultural causes, in a manner consistent with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, and taking into account the effects of non-sustainable production and consumption patterns as well as those of trade and balanced trade relations.

24. While recognizing that in many areas forest land rehabilitation would be needed, and that this would require external inputs and international assistance

in support of local and national efforts, the Panel emphasized the need for prevention rather than mitigation and restoration, with emphasis on improved and sustainable management of the already existing natural forest and other vegetation. The restoration of arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid zones should not, however, focus narrowly on afforestation, but should also deal with the broader issue of forest ecosystem management, including social and economic aspects. The Panel identified the need to strengthen research related to the identification of appropriate species for arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid land restoration, the rehabilitation of existing vegetation types, and the potential of non-timber forest products. This could be considered by the Committee on Science and Technology established as a subsidiary body of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa.

25. The Panel should consider the merits of the application of bottom-up approaches along with top-down approaches, involving all major concerned groups. It emphasized the need to draw more extensively on local and traditional knowledge. These approaches should be supported by an enabling legislative and institutional framework that includes secure rights and access to land. Sustainable development strategies and national forest and land use programmes should be coordinated and could be encouraged, as appropriate. Initiatives for action in regions affected or threatened by desertification and the effects of drought should come from the affected countries.

26. The Panel emphasized the need for donors, international agencies and recipient countries to engage in adequate consultations in order to develop efficient and coordinated programmes of international cooperation on forests consistent with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, and in accordance with the mandate of the Panel, Agenda 21 and the Forest Principles.

27. The Panel noted that, consistent with actions and developments under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification:

(a) An integrated approach should be adopted to the management of existing vegetation, reforestation, afforestation and the restoration of fragile forest ecosystems affected or threatened by desertification and/or drought within the overall social and economic development of those areas;

(b) Continuing forest-related analysis and monitoring of past, present and future experiences, including biophysical, economic, social and ecological aspects were important for sustainable forest management. Developing countries should be assisted so as to increase their capacity for these activities;

(c) Partnership, collaboration and sharing of responsibilities involved among local communities, Governments, non-governmental organizations and other interested groups should be strengthened, including long-term institutional and legal arrangements;

(d) Donors, international agencies and recipient countries should engage in consultations in order to develop efficient and coordinated programmes of international cooperation to combat desertification consistent with the United

Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and within the broader mandate of the Panel, Agenda 21 and the Forest Principles;

(e) A closer relationship should be established between reforestation and management of existing forest ecosystems, including in-depth study of traditional agrosylvopastoral systems, for the purpose of benefiting from existing knowledge, including greater attention to the potential of non-timber forest products. International cooperation is also required in this respect.

The impact of airborne pollution on forests

28. The Panel noted that the impact of air pollution on forest health was a problem affecting not only parts of Europe, but also many other parts of the world. The need for a preventive approach to combating air pollution, including considerations of production and consumption patterns, was stressed. The Panel also stressed the importance of the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution and welcomed the widespread and general application of the critical loads approach adopted in the context of this Convention.

29. The Panel emphasized the need for continuing monitoring of the impact of air pollution on forest health, but also stressed the need for continuing action to reduce air pollution, including action to transfer and supply the best available as well as future technology. The solution to the problem had to be based on action outside the forest. A synthesis of the impact of airborne pollutants on forests, in particular in Central and Eastern Europe, and an assessment of ongoing activities and proposals for possible future actions should be examined.

30. The Panel noted that:

(a) An evaluation should be made of the experience of forest decline world wide and of pollutant-related declines where they had occurred and how the countries concerned addressed such decline;

(b) The critical loads approach might be considered by those countries where forests were, or might be, affected by air pollution;

(c) National strategies might include prevention of damaging air pollution and reduction of transboundary pollution;

(d) The potential impact on forest health from inputs of nutrients and pollutants from the atmosphere, acting in combination with other processes such as natural weathering and leaching, should be recognized in forest planning and management;

(e) Programmes monitoring the impact of airborne pollution on forest health in countries of the European Union (EU) and the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) should continue, and be extended to other areas as required;

(f) Countries should be encouraged to cooperate in activities related to the impact of airborne pollution on forest health, including the dissemination

of information to the public and the access to existing data of potential users including managers and policy makers;

(g) Specific research and field data collection should be continued to support the above-mentioned activities, including work on ecosystem functions where pollutant depositions threatened sustainability;

(h) Other material for incorporation in the report to the Panel at its third session should include a comprehensive study on biomass, management, regeneration and silviculture of native species of arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid ecosystems; information on emissions of sulphur dioxide in a historical perspective; and acid rain.

3. Needs and requirements of countries with low forest cover (programme element I.5)

31. The Panel considered the report of the Secretary-General on programme element I.5, contained in document E/CN.17/IPF/1996/4, taking into account the relevant paragraphs of the Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests (Forest Principles) and chapter 11 of Agenda 21. That report provided material that could be relevant to many of the other programme elements.

32. The Panel called for a working definition of low forest cover, applicable to all countries. A classification that also took note of the balance between supply of, and demand for, forest goods and services might also be developed, considering the work of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. 6/ Based on any definition, however, the group of countries identified as having low forest cover are likely to be heterogeneous. Low forest cover has many causes, and the present situation is constantly changing. Some countries are actively expanding their forest, while others are approaching qualification for entry into the low-forest cover category.

33. The restricted area of forests in countries with low forest cover is of especial importance for the production of timber and the provision of a diversity of goods and services. These services, including protection of water catchments, supply of energy, maintenance of biological diversity, contribution to food security, recreation and heath rehabilitation, need to be properly evaluated.

34. The conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources should be integrated into national forest and land use plans in countries with low forest cover. Many of the forest types in these countries are distinctive or even rare, while the proportion included in nationally designated protected areas is often below average. The possibility of networks of protected areas to be developed at national and

regional levels, linked by corridors and extended by well-managed buffer zones, was referred to.

35. Countries need to consider at national level what could be the optimum level of forest cover they require. Policy options for securing an appropriate supply of forest goods and services need to be defined taking into account the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity. The national designation of a permanent forest estate requires that countries consider the many uses to which it could be put. Countries will also need to assess how far such services could be provided outside the forest sector. Some countries, however, will need to import forest goods or even consider substitution, where practicable. The full environmental costs of such substitution should be evaluated. The reduction of waste and increased efficiency of production of forest goods could make a substantial contribution to conserving forest resources.

36. Additional information may be necessary as a basis for forest action plans in countries with low forest cover, but the information already existing should be used as efficiently as possible. Positive, short-term and intersectoral actions may be needed to address immediate needs both in developed and in developing countries. The action priorities are clearly likely to differ among countries.

37. The Panel noted that many of the issues highlighted under this programme element also arose elsewhere in its agenda, including under programme elements I.4 and III.1. It also emphasized that actions under this programme element needed to be coordinated with action under the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

38. Turning to action, The Panel noted that:

(a) Countries with low forest cover had a particular need to ensure security of forest goods and services through sustainable management of all types of forests;

(b) Forest conservation programmes needed to be based on considerations of quality as well as quantity, and to pay particular attention to distinctive forest types important for biological diversity;

(c) Plantations should be planned and managed to enhance production and provision of goods and services while taking into account the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources, using indigenous species where possible and taking pressure off natural forests. Forest plantations should not be a substitute for natural ecosystems of high ecological and cultural value;

(d) Participation and cooperation should be promoted at both national and international levels. At the national level, the participation of forest dwellers and local people in decision-making should be enhanced where necessary. Cooperation for capacity-building, technology transfer and finance should be

promoted at the international level, to improve the abilities of low-forest cover countries to make the best use of their resources;

(e) Relevant and appropriate information should be collected and disseminated where this would be done cost-effectively;

(f) All developed countries, in particular developed countries with low forest cover, should not only protect their remaining forests, but also make efforts to increase their forest cover. Developed countries should assist developing countries with low forest cover in protecting and increasing their forest area. A similar effort should be made for developing countries that were not categorized as having a low forest cover, when they had substantive areas with low forest cover.

39. The Panel requested its secretariat, in the course of its preparations for the discussions at the third session of the Panel as well as for the final consideration at the Panel's fourth session, to take into account current and future discussions on other relevant programme elements of its programme of work, as well as related government-sponsored initiatives under way, taking account of paragraphs 15 and 16 of the report of the Panel on its first session. The Panel also requested the Secretariat to propose a good working definition of low forest cover, and to take into consideration studies on ways of improving the productivity, conservation and enhancement of low-forest cover areas at all levels.

4. International cooperation in financial assistance and technology transfer for sustainable forest management (programme element II)

40. The Panel considered the report of the Secretary-General on programme element II, contained in document E/CN.17/IPF/1996/5. The Panel emphasized that Agenda 21, particularly chapter 11, the Forest Principles and the relevant work of the Commission on Sustainable Development provided the general framework for relevant deliberations in the Panel, which should focus, however, on forest-related aspects of international cooperation in financial assistance and technology transfer. Furthermore, the Panel reiterated that these cross-cutting issues were relevant to all other programme elements within its terms of reference.

41. It was emphasized that international cooperation in finance and technology transfer was essential if sustainable forest management was to be achieved. Critical areas need to be effectively addressed, such as those relating to the transfer and development of environmentally sound technology on favourable terms, as mutually agreed, and the mobilization of financial resources, including the provision of new and additional resources, taking into account principles 10 and 11 of the Forest Principles and the relevant chapters of Agenda 21, with a view to assisting developing countries in pursuing policies and comprehensive strategies for achieving sustainable forest management. The results of the ongoing relevant work in the Commission on Sustainable Development should also be taken into account. Principle 2 (a) of the Forest Principles should be also fully recognized. Special reference was also made to principle 1 (b) of the Forest Principles.

42. The Panel considered statistical data indicating some decline in official development assistance (ODA), both as a percentage of gross national product (GNP) and in some cases specifically as regards forest programmes. The Panel noted that the reliability and usefulness of the statistics would be enhanced if the forestry components of the financial assistance to rural development, environment and natural resource management were taken into account.

43. It was recognized that additional levels of funding from all sources, including investment, were needed to bring about sustainable forest management. Concerns were expressed regarding the lack of real progress in the implementation of commitments accepted in chapter 33 of Agenda 21 which made it more difficult to achieve sustainable forest management world wide. It was stressed, however, that new and additional funding for sustainable forest management should not be realized at the expense of other priority areas. The Panel recognized the important role of ODA in financing sustainable forest management, particularly in the least developed countries. ODA can also play a catalytic role in financing sustainable forest management. More specifically, ODA could be seen as a form of leverage for mobilizing additional funding from all other sources. In this context, it was stressed that serious attempts should be made by donor countries to raise their levels of ODA relevant to forests.

44. The Panel emphasized that existing financial resources, including ODA, should be used efficiently and effectively. This should be facilitated by policy reforms, where appropriate, that favour sustainable forest management. It was also further acknowledged that efficiency could be improved through increased absorptive capacity for financial flows in the developing countries and countries with economies in transition, which, in turn, might require financial support in the area of capacity-building. More efficient and effective programmes will help to attract greater financial resources. National plans and programmes for sustainable forest management should include cost-benefit considerations. The importance of transparency and a participatory approach in the elaboration of forest-related programmes was also highlighted in this context.

45. Concerns were expressed that multilateral financial institutions and mechanisms had imposed conditionalities on developing countries that had not always proved to be fully compatible with the goals of sustainable forest management.

46. The Panel felt that bilateral and multilateral cooperation for financial assistance should take fully into account national priorities formulated under national forest plans, programmes and strategies of recipient countries, and that consultative processes with appropriate national authorities should be enhanced. Better coordination, both among donors and between donors and recipients, should be encouraged to maximize efficiency in the use of existing resources and in technology transfer. Approaches such as forest partnership agreements may offer some promise in this regard but more clarification and further understanding of the scope and purpose of these and of national forest funds are required to avoid confusion and duplication with respect to existing financing schemes and funds. The elaboration of these instruments has to involve all relevant parties.

47. The Panel emphasized that forest-related projects that had global environmental benefits should be supported through Global Environment Facility (GEF) programmes relevant to biological diversity, climate change and international waters. Therefore, it was felt that, at this point, a separate window for forests in GEF need not be created. Concerns were also expressed regarding the overall inadequacy of funds in GEF. Furthermore, the need for GEF forest-related projects to meet the existing eligibility criteria, as well as the need to take into account the guidance provided by the conferences of the parties to relevant conventions, was highlighted.

48. It was also noted that domestic sources of finance needed to be identified and mobilized and that a more conducive environment for viable and profitable forestry business should be created in recipient countries in order to complement ODA and to enhance the predictability and continuity of financing for sustainable forest management.

49. The Panel considered various means for mobilizing additional resources internally, including through such means as rent capture, unimpeded markets, transferable licences/concessions, removal of damaging subsidies, reduction of illegal logging and better valuation of forest products, goods and services.

50. The Panel recognized the potential for generating additional revenues through various innovative mechanisms such as joint ventures and debt-for-nature swaps. The Panel felt that further analysis of these mechanisms was still required. Reservations were expressed in connection with carbon offsets, tradable permits and debt-for-policy-reform swaps. It was noted that some of these mechanisms were already being addressed in other forums such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Convention on Biological Diversity and that the Panel should take into full account the outcomes of discussions in those forums. Furthermore, the Panel should take into account the relevant work undertaken by the Commission on Sustainable Development.

51. The Panel considered that the level of financial assistance for capacity-building, including education, should be increased. In so far as infrastructure development for small- and medium-sized enterprises should be increased as well, it was stressed that the private sector had an important role to play in funding these activities.

52. There is a need to encourage stronger participation and investment by the private sector to attain the sustainable development of forest resources. At present, however, the objectives of the private sector do not necessarily support the promotion of sustainable forest management. While the need is recognized for formulating attractive incentives for private sector investments, enabling conditions in developing countries and countries with economies in transition are equally important with respect to attracting these investments. The possibility of elaborating codes of conduct applicable to forestry activities carried out through joint ventures and by the private sector, perhaps initially at the national level, was suggested in this regard.

53. Forest plantations should be given due recognition in view of the role they can play in reducing pressure on natural forests and contributing to sustainable development. Policy frameworks and regulations should be designed in such a way

as to ensure that private investment in forest industry contributes to sustainable development, including enhanced protection and conservation of forest resources.

54. The Panel recognized that sustainable management of forests could be greatly supported through establishing, in a cooperative endeavour between developed and developing countries, institutional and administrative frameworks conducive to foreign investment and the reinvestment of revenues derived from forest activities, as well as to the transfer of technology.

55. Calculation of net investment cost at the national level should be based on priority activities, including development projects, in national forest plans and programmes or other national-level policies. While considering the possibility that deforestation could lead to disinvestment, the Panel recognized that assumptions and methodologies used to estimate net investment had to be clarified.

56. While recognizing that additional information on investment in forestry was desirable and should be pursued, the Panel requested that procedures for data collection should be kept simple. There was also a need to avoid duplication of existing activities. In this regard, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in cooperation with other relevant agencies and organizations, was requested to continue gathering and collating relevant information, as well as increasing the accessibility of that information to all interested parties.

57. The Panel felt that more emphasis should be given to the formulation of recommendations and options for action on technology transfer. It also highlighted the need to further strengthen North-South and South-South cooperation in technology transfer (including between three or several countries). Moreover, the Panel agreed that technologies in the public domain, which constituted the majority of technologies relevant to sustainable forest management, should be made more easily accessible through greater transparency and broader dissemination of information. Furthermore, transfer of relevant privately owned technologies should be encouraged. The private sector in developed and developing countries should also be encouraged to invest in scientific and technological development activities through joint ventures so as to complement current joint ventures in manufacturing. The Panel also stressed the need for greater reliance on national-level expertise.

58. The Panel considered that priority in technology transfer and capacity-building should be given to the following areas: information dissemination to improve land-use planning and improvement of forest yields; technology and methods that could reduce environmental damages due to current forestry practices; species research for tree improvement for rehabilitation, reforestation and nursery development; technology and methods for retaining forest values, including biological diversity; incorporation of indigenous knowledge in plant utilization; new and renewable sources of energy; environmentally sound logging technologies; and development and implementation of national forest strategies.

59. The Panel noted that the workshop on financing for sustainable forest management, jointly sponsored by the Governments of Denmark, South Africa and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), could provide a valuable input into the formulation of concrete recommendations by the Panel to advance the deliberations on issues relevant to financing.

60. The Panel requested that the relevant report of the Secretary-General to be prepared as material for the Panel's deliberations at the third session of the Panel should place greater emphasis on international aspects of financing and technology transfer, and should address, in particular, the following issues:

(a) Financial resources:

(i) Analysis of mechanisms and policy options, including the role of actual and potential international and national financial sources for sustainable forest management;

(ii) Suggestions on possible criteria and indicators for monitoring financial flows for achieving sustainable forest management, as well as relevant social and economic dimensions, such as market forces and consumption patterns;

(iii) Funding for relevant capacity-building programmes;

(iv) Roles and scopes of national environmental funds;

(v) Matters relating to pricing, subsidies and deforestation charges;

(vi) The relevant role of the private sector, including external trade and investment, as well as analysis of feasibility and desirability of codes of conduct for the private sector in the context of sustainable forest management;

(vii) Role of innovative funding sources and mechanisms;

(viii) Coordination and synergy between funding sources and organizations;

(b) Transfer of technology:

(i) Assessment of progress achieved since Rio;

(ii) Ways and means for:

a. Promoting more effective transfer of technology, in both the public and the private domains, including identification of suitable existing and potential mechanisms;

b. Strengthening North-South and South-South cooperation;

c. Increasing the role of research institutions;

d. Attracting private sector funding in the development of environmentally sound technologies, including through joint ventures.

5. Assessment of the multiple benefits of all types of forests (programme element III.1 (a))

61. The Panel considered the report of the Secretary-General on programme element III.1 (a), contained in document E/CN.17/IPF/1996/6, taking into account the relevant paragraphs of the Forest Principles and chapter 11 of Agenda 21.

62. The Panel emphasized that assessment of the actual and potential conditions of all types of forests was an essential basis for sustainable forest management, and for a wide range of considerations related to forests at the local, national, regional and global level. The importance of national inventories was underlined.

63. The Panel noted that there were many shortfalls and gaps in existing information. The database regarding both developed and developing countries is uneven. Much attention is still given to timber and forest cover, whereas other goods and services provided by forests such as fuelwood, the sustainable use, conservation and equitable sharing of benefits of biological diversity, soil and water conservation, carbon sequestration and other social, cultural and economic aspects are rarely covered and will need more attention.

64. The Panel stressed that forest assessments should adopt a holistic approach and be user-oriented and demand-driven. There was general agreement on the priority to be given to meeting the needs of forest managers. However, further study would be needed to define the levels of precision required and the specific needs of different users. The need to fully utilize the data already collected was stressed.

65. The Panel further noted that capacity-building at national and local levels was crucial, and should involve all interested parties, including non-governmental organizations, local communities, indigenous people and other major groups. Forest assessment should be multidisciplinary and involve data collection and analysis by local, national and possibly regional as well as international institutions.

66. The Panel emphasized that national forest assessments should use nationally accepted criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management. The need to include qualitative as well as quantitative information on forest goods and services was stressed.

67. While recognizing the widespread application of remote sensing techniques and geographical information systems for forest assessments, the Panel noted the need for ground surveys for some parameters. The Panel also noted that assessments represented a significant financial burden, in particular for developing countries, and that they should therefore be carried out in the most cost-effective manner. In some cases, reallocation of financial resources may be required to support effective forest assessment programmes.

68. National forest assessment programmes should be transparent and accessible to all interested parties. Efforts should be made to harmonize approaches to data collection and analysis in order to enhance comparability among countries.

69. The Panel recognized that inadequate assessment of the contribution of forests to the national GNP had in some cases led to underinvestment in forest management.

70. The current 10-year interval between global forest resources assessments was considered to be too long. Shorter intervals could be considered together with the possibility of continuous updating of data, taking into account the financial implications, that is, the costs of meeting such requirements, for FAO and the developing countries.

71. Concerning international cooperation, the Panel agreed that much work needed to be done on defining the scale, scope, content, frequency, dissemination and availability of data. FAO, in partnership with other international organizations, national institutions and non-governmental organizations, should contribute towards coordinating international efforts on forest assessment. The Panel also agreed that coordination was needed between forest and other related information systems, and stressed the need for South-South cooperation, as well as cooperation at the national level among all interested parties both within and outside the forest sector.

72. The Panel highlighted the following points and actions:

(a) Intensified use should be made of assessment data and remote sensing public domain technology and data already available, all of which should be more widely disseminated. The use of existing FAO data, in combination with other data sets, offers a rich potential for addressing urgent questions in a cost-effective manner. Data interpretation in response to user needs is necessary;

(b) A study of uses and categories of users of forest resources and related information at the international level was required. This would be particularly important when discussing new types of information to be included in the global forest resources assessment;

(c) National-level indicators for sustainable forest management should be integrated into forest assessment. This should be done in a way that is cost-effective and scientifically sound, while recognizing differences in economies and cultures of countries. While some indicators are quantitative, those of some other important goods and services are qualitative but should still be included;

(d) Research on forest inventory and monitoring techniques should be strengthened with a view to expanding the scope of forest assessments to respond to the demand for new information in a cost-effective manner;

(e) The lack of basic information called for capacity-building in data gathering, which should be integrated with strategic planning and decision-making. National institutions for forest assessment should be strengthened as a basic element of action towards sustainable forest management;

(f) Mobilization of necessary funding should be given due consideration in view of the inadequate financial resources currently available for national-level forest assessments;

(g) Coordination of efforts at international level should be enhanced. FAO should act in partnership with other international organizations, national institutions and non-governmental organizations, and ensure better coordination and avoid overlap between forest and other related information systems;

(h) Interpretation and dissemination of information, including dissemination through electronic means of national-level information, should be ensured for those countries and interested parties that had difficulties in accessing internationally available information.

6. Methodologies for proper valuation of the multiple benefits of forests (programme element III.1 (b))

73. The Panel considered the report of the Secretary-General on programme element III.1 (b) contained in document E/CN.17/IPF/1996/7, taking into account the relevant paragraphs of the Forest Principles and chapter 11 of Agenda 21.

74. The Panel stressed that forests provided a wide range of benefits, some of which were easy to quantify or describe in qualitative terms, while others were more difficult to measure. The close relationship with programme element III.1 (a), (forest assessment) was underlined.

75. The Panel noted that several methodologies for the valuation of forest goods and services were still in the early stages of development and had many limitations. Valuation is often site- and time-specific.

76. The Panel emphasized that economic valuation was only one of many considerations for decision-making, and could not become a substitute for the process of political decision-making on forests, which included wide-ranging aspects such as environmental, socio-economic, ethical, cultural and religious considerations. The risk associated with the disappearance of forests, especially with respect to biological diversity, is not adequately covered by present methodologies.

77. The Panel noted that expensive valuation exercises should not be performed at the expense of more pressing basic needs, such as the development and application of reliable data systems, and the development of strategies and mechanisms to make sustainable forest management a politically achievable objective. A step-by-step process should be implemented to address the various needs in a progressive manner.

78. The Panel recognized that the results of valuation, when applied as a neutral tool, had an important potential, as a source of information to all interested parties, and for increasing public awareness, particularly on non-marketable forest goods and services.

79. Although the potential usefulness of forest valuation methodologies was recognized by the Panel, it felt that their complexity and the costs involved might limit their widespread application. Innovative and simple scientific valuation methods were needed.

80. The Panel noted that activities related to the valuation of forest goods and services provided new opportunities for international cooperation and generation of awareness. This could include training of staff as well as decision makers and work on ways and means to include forest goods and services in national accounts. The need to exchange existing experiences in a number of countries, as well as to establish pilot studies and schemes, was emphasized by the Panel.

81. The Panel highlighted the following points and actions:

(a) Research should be promoted in order to further develop forest valuation methodologies. This should include the exploration of innovative and simple methodologies for collective decision-making on forests that involved various interested parties, such as local communities, and indigenous people;

(b) New forest valuation methodologies should take into account the following criteria: practical applicability, simplicity and clarity, multidisciplinarity, cost-effectiveness, orientation towards non-marketable goods and non-quantifiable services, neutrality and scientific validity. This process should remain country-driven and country-specific, and involve sharing of information and experiences between countries;

(c) New research programmes should fully recognize the ecological, social, cultural and religious values of forests, and pay particular attention to global dimensions of climate change, and the sustainable use, conservation and equitable sharing of the benefits of biological diversity;

(d) Further research might need to be undertaken on policy issues related to forest values. In particular, approaches to the inclusion of forest valuation in national resource accounts might be further explored;

(e) A matrix showing the application, geographical scale and data sets required for different forest valuation methods might be prepared.

B. Programme elements that were discussed initially

1. Progress in national forest and land use plans (programme element I.1)

82. The Panel took note of the progress report of the Secretary-General on programme element I.1 (document E/CN.17/IPF/1996/8) and requested that the following points be taken into account in preparation for substantive discussion of this issue during the third session of the Panel:

(a) Terms like "forestry", "forest plans", "forest programmes" and "forest strategies" should be defined properly and used consistently;

(b) Consideration should be given to all types of forests and utilization patterns in developing as well as developed countries, and countries with economies in transition;

(c) Some countries might prefer to pursue their forest policy goals by other means than formal plans and programmes. Specific decisions in this regard were a prerogative of national Governments;

(d) International guidelines for national forest programmes should be developed;

(e) Actions being undertaken by the Panel in relation to this programme element should take into account those under existing instruments such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, in accordance with the Forest Principles and chapter 11 of Agenda 21;

(f) The Panel considered the workshops on "Promotion of national forest and land use programmes" sponsored by Germany and "Sustainable forestry and land use: the process of consensus-building" sponsored by Sweden and Uganda, to be held in June 1996 and October 1996 respectively, to be inputs into the preparations for the substantive discussion on this programme element;

(g) The interface between forests and other land uses must be examined, and national forest plans and programmes must be integrated with wider land use plans in the context of chapter 10 of Agenda 21, as well as socio-economic policies. They must be adopted at a high level in national Government;

(h) Forest plans and programmes should have a long-term approach and be based on the sustainable management of all forest values;

(i) Forest plans and programmes should be country-driven and make maximum use of national expertise, in particular in international cooperation programmes;

(j) It was recognized that, in many countries, Government had the central responsibility for the custodianship and the sustainable management of the forest estate. However, an open, decentralized and participatory process involving local communities and other relevant interested parties, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector, will often enhance effective implementation. National, subnational and local planning systems should be designed to strategically identify priority areas for participatory planning and management systems;

(k) The scientific foundation for forest plans and programmes should be strong and appropriate criteria and indicators could play an important role in this respect;

(l) Forest plans and programmes should be based on sound economic valuation of forest resources, including environmental services and non-timber forest products;

(m) The key role of the forest owner should be recognized. Account must be taken of jurisdiction at various levels within the country;

(n) The rights and interests of forest dwellers and indigenous people, as well as their religious and cultural values, must be recognized and provided for, in the context of national laws;

(o) Forest plans and programmes should provide opportunities to reconcile conflicting interests;

(p) Forest plans and programmes should take into account the impact of international trade and market forces on the national forest sector, in terms of transparent and non-discriminatory market access;

(q) Capacity-building, the strengthening of institutions, and training could be a key to the achievement of national plans;

(r) Poor donor coordination at national and international levels was another impediment that must be considered. An explanation of the current mechanisms in this area should be included in the document for substantive discussion at the third session of the Panel;

(s) Specific mechanisms for the implementation of actions suggested by the Panel should be considered.

2. Traditional forest-related knowledge (programme element I.3)

83. The Panel considered the report of the Secretary-General on programme element I.3, contained in document E/CN.17/IPF/1996/9 and Corr.1, prepared for its initial discussion, taking into account the relevant paragraphs of the Forest Principles and chapter 11 of Agenda 21.

84. The Panel emphasized that the substantive discussion should focus principally on the terms of reference for this programme element as determined by the Commission on Sustainable Development at its third session and the Panel at its first session with reference to principles 4 and 5 (a) of the Forest Principles. The Panel recognized that those terms of reference included considerations of how traditional knowledge and practices in their broadest sense could be applied to sustainable forest management. The Panel took note of the statement on biodiversity and forests from the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity as annexed to the report of the Secretary-General mentioned in paragraph 83 and its relevance for work under different Panel programme elements. The Panel also noted that it would need to take into account the outcome of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity at its third session in relation to indigenous knowledge.

85. The Panel recognized that traditional forest-related knowledge, innovations and practices, especially as they related to sustainable forest management and the use of non-timber forest products, constituted an important body of experience that was relevant for the fulfilment of its mandate. This experience

embraces time-tested, site-specific and socially relevant practices, as well as the innovations and practices of indigenous people, forest dwellers and other local communities, drawn from forestry, agroforestry and agricultural traditions.

86. The Panel noted the need to address the relationship between traditional forest-related knowledge and biological diversity, and to take account of other relevant intergovernmental processes, in particular the Convention on Biological Diversity, so as to avoid duplication or overlap.

87. The Panel recognized the need for its deliberations to focus on traditional forest-related knowledge as it related to sustainable forest management practices, with particular reference to principle 12 (d) of the Forest Principles (concerning appropriate indigenous capacity and local knowledge regarding the conservation and sustainable development of forests). In this context, it requested that, for substantive discussion at its third session, the report contain well-defined proposals for national action, including an exploration of the need for and the feasibility of mechanisms for considering ways and means as regards the effective recognition, protection and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of traditional forest-related knowledge related to forest management practices.

88. The Panel agreed that the following issue merited further development: providing technical, technological and scientific advice on traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of forest use and conservation, including:

(a) Development of methods for the acquisition, evaluation and analysis of traditional technologies;

(b) Procedures for the storage, retrieval and dissemination of information;

(c) Identification of constituents, interested relevant parties, users and/or beneficiaries;

(d) Development of tools and mechanisms for protection and benefit-sharing;

(e) Identification and application of methodologies for the appropriate utilization of indigenous and local community ethno-ecological concepts, and establishment of criteria for identification, monitoring and environmental impact assessment, as well as enhanced public education and awareness.

89. The Panel further agreed that the following matters should be addressed during substantive discussion:

(a) Recognition of the key role played by indigenous people, forest dwellers and local communities in defining participatory approaches to forest and land management, with the involvement of all interested relevant parties from both the public and private sectors, and with greater focus on resource management institutions, land-use systems and conflict resolution;

(b) The complexity of the issues surrounding traditional forest-related knowledge, including traditions relating to access and utilization, as well as to knowledge of the resources themselves;

(c) The need for action to study, develop and apply such knowledge for the development of new sustainable forest management approaches;

(d) Options to inventory, document, categorize, protect, store and retrieve traditional forest-related knowledge, including that related to medicinal plants and other non-wood forest products, including the need to protect the information so generated;

(e) Opportunities for the wider application of traditional forest-related knowledge;

(f) Ways and means to ensure effective protection of indigenous rights and payment of royalties on intellectual property rights in the context of national legislation, and to ensure the fair and equitable sharing of benefits, involving local communities and forests dwellers, including ways to determine clearly which individuals belonged to which group;

(g) Approaches to fostering further analysis involving, inter alia, research institutions, indigenous people and non-governmental organizations;

(h) Mechanisms for the exchange of national experiences;

(i) Mechanisms to stimulate programmes for the development of products derived from traditional knowledge, including the involvement of the private sector and financial investments as appropriate.

90. The Panel considered that no application, utilization, study or systematization of traditional forest-related knowledge should take place in a way that could undermine the effective protection of indigenous rights, or the need to ensure the equitable sharing of benefits.

91. The Panel emphasized the need for capacity-building, especially at the local level, as an essential component of all elements of paragraphs 88 and 89 above (in the development of approaches for the use of traditional forest-related knowledge).

92. The Panel felt that the substantive discussion of this programme element would require careful attention's being paid to the financial implications of the proposals to be considered.

93. The Panel agreed that Governments, relevant international organizations, non-governmental organizations and indigenous and local communities should be encouraged to contribute to the preparation of documentation for the third session of the Panel.

94. On the basis of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, the Panel noted that developed countries bore a special responsibility in regard to facilitating the necessary conditions for the

conservation and sustainable use of forest biological diversity. This implies a constructive approach to the transfer of technologies and financial resources.

95. Within the context of international cooperation, the Panel suggested:

(a) The consideration of other points including "clearing-house mechanisms", the repatriation of information, and biosafety developments;

(b) Support for joint ventures focused upon the management and development of enterprises in the field of forest-related biotechnology.

3. Criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management (programme element III.2)

96. The Panel considered the report of the Secretary-General on programme element III.2, contained in document E/CN.17/IPF/1996/10, taking into account the relevant paragraphs of the Forest Principles and chapter 11 of Agenda 21, and requested that the following points be taken into account in preparation for substantive discussion during the third session of the Panel.

97. Concerning suggestions for items for discussion contained in paragraph 60 of the report on programme element III.2, the Panel expressed support for examining the possibilities for developing a global consensus on concepts, terms and definitions concerned with sustainable forest management, as well as for promoting ways and means to further expand and intensify activities in the identification of socio-economically, environmentally, biologically and institutionally relevant criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management, with special reference to promoting national initiatives in those ecological and geographical regions or subregions that were currently not covered by, or participating in, ongoing international initiatives. This would include special ways and means to assist those developing countries in which forests and woodlands were essential in meeting basic subsistence needs of rural populations and forest-dwelling peoples.

98. Reservations were expressed regarding the concept of linking ecological zones in different geographical regions of the world (for example, dry zones in Africa, the Near East, Asia, tropical/subtropical America and the Caribbean) as a first step towards achieving internationally compatible criteria and indicators of sustainable management of all types of forests.

99. The Panel also expressed reservations with respect to its position concerning the development of methodologies to quantify indicators currently recorded as qualitative and descriptive, as well as mechanisms to promote cross-sectoral linkages. However, clarification of links between national-level and forest management unit-level activities needs further examination.

100. Some support was expressed for the promotion of ways and means to maximize the exchange of information, experiences and know-how at global level in all issues related to the criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management.

101. In addition, the following specific points were raised:

(a) Criteria and indicators were not an end in themselves, but should be considered tools for achieving sustainable forest management. Criteria assist in characterizing sustainable forest management, whereas quantitative and qualitative indicators provide the basis for assessing progress towards sustainable forest management. Criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management can play an important role in ensuring the scientific foundation for forest plans (related to programme element I.1);

(b) There was a need for a broad spectrum of indicators, considering social, cultural, economic, ecological, legal and policy aspects. Not all aspects are quantifiable. However, this does not make qualitative aspects less important. In many national and regional initiatives, both quantitative and qualitative indicators have already been established;

(c) Criteria and indicators should contribute to improving the scope of forest assessment in terms of social, economic, cultural, religious and environmental values and benefits;

(d) Possibilities and constraints for developing consensus on concepts, terms and definitions concerned with sustainable forest management should be explored;

(e) There should be an analysis of the implications of the proliferation of initiatives for the development of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management of all types of forests. The extent of convergence among national-level criteria and indicators at the regional level should be analysed;

(f) Development of criteria and indicators for application at regional level, in addition to national level, should be considered. An analysis should be made of the degree of comparability among ongoing initiatives, as well as the degree of compatibility and the appropriateness of convergence among international initiatives;

(g) Experiences at national level should be revised, and engagement of regions/countries not yet participating in any of the ongoing initiatives should be sought;

(h) Development of national-level criteria and indicators should be a gradual process, to be based on national policies for sustainable forest management;

(i) Countries might develop indicators at the national, local and management unit level according to their own needs;

(j) The possibility of forging closer links between ongoing international initiatives, including the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) Objective Year 2000 and the work of other international institutions, as well as of providing support to research through relevant entities should be pursued;

(k) The process of development of criteria and indicators at national level should be simple and transparent and scientifically based, and reflect, inter alia, economic, social and ecological differences;

(l) Criteria and indicators for application at the national level should be developed through a process involving all relevant parties including native forest dwellers and non-governmental organizations;

(m) Field testing and the application of national-level criteria and indicators were an important aspect for further development;

(n) Criteria and indicators might assist in clarifying issues related to certification of forest products. Attention should be given to the link between national-, subnational- and forest management unit-level activities;

(o) Development of criteria and indicators should not constitute a restriction to trade in a sustainable development framework;

(p) Criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management should not be applied so as to restrict the status of a country in relation to ODA.

102. The Panel considered the International Seminar of Experts on Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management sponsored by Finland, and to be held in Helsinki from 19 to 22 August 1996, to be an important input into the preparations for the substantive discussion of this programme element at the Panel's third session.

4. Trade and environment in relation to forest products and services (programme element IV)

103. The Panel considered the report of the Secretary-General contained in document E/CN.17/IPF/1996/11. It considered that the preparations for substantive discussion at the third session of the Panel should take into account the following points.

104. The important role of international trade in forest products in promoting sustainable forest management was recognized. However, it was also recognized that trade policies could also have adverse impacts on the conservation, use and sustainable development of forests.

105. While debates on trade, environment and sustainable development were under way in other intergovernmental forums, the Panel deliberations should focus on forests and forest products, in accordance with the Panel's mandate and taking into account chapter 11 of Agenda 21 and relevant paragraphs of the Forest Principles adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

106. In view of the wide range and complexity of the issues involved in the question of trade and environment in relation to forest products and services, the need to draw on the expertise and relevant work being done elsewhere, in particular by the World Trade Organization, the United Nations Conference on

Trade and Development (UNCTAD), FAO, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), ITTO and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), was noted.

107. The following specific points should be taken into account in preparing various sections of the report of the Secretary-General for substantive discussion at the third session of the Panel:

Scope of analysis

108. The scope of analysis should include:

(a) Wood and non-wood products as well as forest-related services from all types of forests;

(b) Domestic trade in forest products;

(c) Promotion of sustainable forest management through mutually supportive roles of trade and environmental policies.

Market access and trade barriers

109. Factors relating to improving market access and dismantling tariff and non-tariff trade barriers that affect exports from both developing and developed countries should encompass:

(a) Findings from case-studies on import and export restrictions imposed by countries on raw and processed forest products;

(b) Tariff escalation and subsidies that distort trade in forest products and negatively affect sustainable forest management;

(c) Findings from case-studies on the relative competitiveness of forest products exports including their value-added products vis-à-vis substitutes and their impacts on sustainable forest management;

(d) Ways and means of eliminating discriminatory trade practices including unilateral restrictions or bans on imports of forest products, in particular from tropical countries.

Certification and labelling

110. Certification and labelling should include:

(a) Link and potential role of voluntary certification in promoting sustainable forest management of all type of forests in a non-discriminatory, science-based, transparent, participatory and cost-effective manner, taking into account the interest of all relevant parties;

(b) Clarification of issues related to certification including its purposes, levels of application, implications for market and trade, governance,

and benefits and costs, as a basis for a framework of international understanding on forest products certification;

(c) With regard to the potential costs and benefits of certification, factors related to the competitiveness of forest products and substitutes.

Full-cost internalization

111. Full-cost internalization should include the following items and actions:

(a) In assessing the means to promote the development of the methodology for a full evaluation of forest goods and services, account should be taken of work being carried out under programme element III.1 (b) (methodologies for proper valuation of the multiple benefits of forests) and III.2 (criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management, in particular at the management unit level);

(b) The feasibility and potential costs and benefits of extending cost internalization to both forest products and their substitutes.

Market transparency

112. Market transparency should encompass:

(a) Means to strengthen current reporting and capacity-building activities of ITTO, the International Trade Centre (ITC), UNCTAD/GATT and FAO to increase transparency in markets for forest products from all types of forests;

(b) Proposals on how market transparency could be used as an instrument for identifying key market characteristics having the potential to affect trade and forest management decisions such as trade flows, pricing, market structures, transportation and distribution channels. This would also help focus attention on adverse forest practices such as illegal logging. Improvements in market transparency may also improve competition and efficiency in marketing and trade.

Promotion of lesser-used species (LUS)

113. This should include ways and means to further promote the marketability of lesser-used species (LUS) through increased investment and research and development (R and D), taking into account existing work done in ITTO and elsewhere. In this context, it should reflect a balance among economic, environmental (including biological diversity-related) and social considerations.

Financing and technology

114. This should include ways and means of attracting increased investment in value-added downstream processing and identifying technological needs focus to promote efficiency in productivity and quality of forest products, in particular in the developing countries.

115. The Panel noted that two country initiatives, namely, the Australian Conference on Labelling of Products from Sustainable Forest Management, and the German/Indonesian Expert Workshop on Certification and Labelling, as well as the workshop on certification organized by the University of British Colombia, Canada, and the University of Agriculture, Malaysia, could provide useful inputs into the discussions on programme element IV.

5. International organizations and multilateral institutions and instruments, including appropriate legal mechanisms (programme element V.1)

116. For its initial discussion of this programme element the Panel considered the report of the Secretary-General contained in document E/CN.17/IPF/1996/12. It considered that the preparations for substantive discussion at the third session of the Panel should take into account the following points, actions and items:

(a) The framework of the analysis should be the Panel's mandate, the Forest Principles, and relevant chapters of Agenda 21, in particular chapter 11, as well as relevant decisions of the Commission on Sustainable Development, keeping in mind the dynamic nature of the forest debate which reflected the national as well as the transboundary, regional and global importance of all types of forests;

(b) The ongoing discussions on broader institutional reform within the United Nations system;

(c) The importance of obtaining a clear view of the forest-related work relevant to programme elements I-IV undertaken by organizations, institutions and instruments, and relevant to the final recommendations of the Panel;

(d) In-depth descriptions of activities carried out by international organizations, and multilateral and research institutions at different geographical levels; the necessity of including elements that could ensure as comprehensive and rigorous an evaluation as possible, making full use of existing evaluations; and an assessment of their comparative strengths and gaps, and of the prioritization of areas requiring enhancement, as well as of their current and potential available resources including financial resources related to projects and programmes supportive of sustainable forest management;

(e) The inclusion of descriptions of existing legal instruments related to forests, and recommendations on their coordinated forest-related implementation;

(f) The need to avoid duplication of work with respect to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;

(g) The existing institutional linkages, accompanied by an analysis of their effectiveness, efficiency and adequacy for meeting current and future demands on the forest sector;

(h) The options for achieving better cooperation and coordination, and for maximizing efficiency and effectiveness, among forest-related international and regional institutions, as well as, if appropriate, for the reorganization of existing structures of governance of those institutions, in order to maximize coordination and the mobilization of their comparative advantages;

(i) The institutional arrangements in other sectors as possible models for developing innovative approaches for adaptation to the forest sector, with a view to identifying future enhanced and better-coordinated institutional arrangements and activities in the forest sector which could provide a clear division of responsibilities accompanied by a clear view of the joint and complementary competence of these organizations with respect to addressing complex forest-related issues;

(j) The options for ensuring enhanced coordination among bilateral and multilateral institutions in order to use available resources for country-driven sustainable forest management strategies in the most efficient and effective manner, keeping in mind in particular the discussions under programme elements I.1 and II;

(k) The linkages and institutional relationships among other organizations such as those involved in research, as well as intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and the ways, means and mechanisms to ensure that they contribute effectively to the activities of United Nations organizations engaged in forest-related activities, and suggest possible options for complementarity of activities;

(l) The analysis and recommendations resulting from the Swiss-Peruvian Initiative in support of the preparations for the substantive discussion of this programme element, as well as the results of the meeting of national forestry action plan coordinators, held in The Hague in February 1995.

117. Preparations should also take into account any specific proposals under programme elements I-IV, relevant to programme element V.1.

V. OTHER MATTERS

A. Matters relating to the third and fourth sessions of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests

118. At the 18th meeting, on 22 March 1996, the Panel had before it a draft decision (E/CN.17/IPF/1996/L.2) entitled "Matters relating to the third and fourth sessions of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests".

119. At the same meeting, the representative of Colombia made a statement.

120. The Panel was informed that UNEP wished to withdraw its offer to host the third session of the Panel in Nairobi. The representative of UNEP thanked the Panel for giving UNEP the opportunity to participate in the Panel process and expressed the hope that in the future UNEP would have the opportunity to offer its facilities to the Panel.

121. The representative of Switzerland announced that the Government of Switzerland would make a financial contribution, the level of which should be determined jointly with the Secretariat, to cover the possible programme budget implications of holding the third session of the Panel in Geneva instead of New York. The purpose of such a contribution would be to facilitate the work of the Panel and possibly to provide for an extra team of interpreters to allow two working groups to meet simultaneously.

122. At the same meeting, the Panel decided to recommend to the Economic and Social Council, through the Commission on Sustainable Development, the adoption of the draft decision as orally amended (see chap. I).

B. Additional voluntary contributions to the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests

123. At the 19th meeting, on 22 March 1996, the Co-Chairman read out a draft decision concerning voluntary contributions, which the Panel adopted (see chap. II).

VI. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE PANEL ON ITS SECOND SESSION

124. At the 19th meeting, on 22 March 1996, the Panel had before it the draft report on its second session (E/CN.17/IPF/1996/L.1), as well as an informal paper containing introductory paragraphs to the report and a number of Co-Chairmen's summaries.

125. At the same meeting, after statements by the representatives of the United States of America, Japan, the Philippines, Italy (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the European Union), Canada, Australia and Papua New Guinea, as well as by the observer for Costa Rica (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China), the Panel took note of the introductory paragraphs and of the Co-Chairmen's summaries and adopted the report.

VII. ORGANIZATIONAL AND OTHER MATTERS

A. Opening and duration of the session

126. The Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests of the Commission on Sustainable Development held its second session from 11 to 22 March 1996, in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 1995/318. The Panel held 19 meetings (1st to 19th meetings).

127. The session was opened by the Co-Chairman, Mr. N. R. Krishnan (India).

128. The Director of the Division for Sustainable Development made an introductory statement.

B. Election of officers

129. At the first meeting, on 11 March 1996, the Panel elected Mr. Manuel Rodriguez (Colombia) to the vacant post of Vice-Chairman.

130. At the same meeting, the Panel agreed that Mr. Juste Boussienguet (Gabon) would serve also as Rapporteur.

131. The Bureau of the Panel comprised the following officers:

Co-Chairmen: Sir Martin Holdgate (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

N. R. Krishnan (India)

Vice-Chairmen: Juste Boussienguet (Gabon)

Anatoliy I. Pisarenko (Russian Federation)

Manuel Rodriguez (Colombia)

C. Agenda and organization of work

132. At the first meeting, on 11 March 1996, the Panel adopted its provisional agenda, contained in document E/CN.17/IPF/1996/1, which read as follows:

1. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.

2. Implementation of forest-related decisions of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development at the national and international levels, including an examination of sectoral and cross-sectoral linkages.

3. International cooperation in financial assistance and technology transfer.

4. Scientific research, forest assessment and development of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management.

5. Trade and environment in relation to forest products and services.

6. International organizations and multilateral institutions and instruments, including appropriate legal mechanisms.

7. Other matters.

8. Adoption of the report of the Panel on its second session.

133. At the same meeting, the Panel approved its organization of work.

D. Attendance

134. The session was attended by representatives of 36 States members of the Commission on Sustainable Development. Observers for other States Members of the United Nations and for non-member States, representatives of organizations of the United Nations system and observers for intergovernmental, non-governmental and other organizations also attended. A list of participants is contained in annex I to the present report.

Notes

1/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I, Resolutions Adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex III.

2/ Ibid., annex II.

3/ See United Nations Environment Programme, Convention on Biological Diversity (Environmental Law and Institutions Programme Activity Centre), June 1992.

4/ A/AC.237/18 (Part II)/Add.1 and Corr.1, annex I.

5/ A/49/84/Add.2, annex, appendix II.

6/ Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April-6 May 1994 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

Annex I

ATTENDANCE

Members

Antigua and Barbuda	
Australia	Roderick Holesgrove, Gary Dolman, Frank Mcinnell, Peter Lawrence
Bahamas	
Bangladesh	
Barbados	
Belarus	Mikhail Kuzmyankou
Belgium	
Benin	
Bolivia	
Brazil	Celso Lafer, Guido da Silva Soares, Antonio Fernando Cruz de Mello, Antonio Otavio Sa Ricarte, Antonio Carlos do Prado, Raimundo Deusdarah Filho, Rubens Cristiano Damas Garlipp, Maria Cristina Weyland Vieira
Bulgaria	Zvetolyub Basmajiev
Canada	David Drake, Ralph Roberts, Jacques Carette, Denyse Rousseau, Rosalie McConnell, Jennifer Irish, Frank Ruddock, Victoria Berry, Jean-Pierre Martel, Martin von Mirbach
Central African Republic	
China	Qu Guilin, Zheng Rui, Zhou Guolin, Zhang Zhiqin
Colombia	Manuel Rodriguez, Carmen Silva Pinzon, Edgar Otavo Rodriguez, Maria Fernanda Acosta, Juan Carlos Espinosa
Finland	Birgitta Stenius-Mladenov, Pekka Patosaari, Elias Lähdesmäki, Leena Karjalainen-Balk, Markku Aho, Heikki Granholm

France	Bernard Chevalier
Gabon	Juste Boussienguet, André-Jules Madingou
Germany	Ulrich Hoenisch, Hagen Frost, Eberhard von Schubert, Peter Franz, Peter Fahrenholtz, Dieter Speidel, Christian Mersmann
Ghana	Edward Dwumfour
Guinea	
Guyana	M. Khalawan
Hungary	
India	N. R. Krishnan, S. K. Pande
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Mostafa Jafari, Hossein Moeini, Hossein Fadaei
Italy	Filippo Anfuso, Filippo Menzinger, Silvano Salvatici, Alfredo Guillet
Japan	Takao Shibata, Harumitsu Hida, Takeshi Goto, Atsuo Ida, Hidenao Sawayama, Hiroaki Shinohara, Kiyohito Onuma, Yutaka Tsunetomi, Kenji Jamigawara
Malaysia	Amha Buang, Thang Hooi Chiew, Abdul Rahim Nik, Hayati Ismail
Mexico	Diana Ponce Lucero Nava, Miguel Antonio Cuesta, Dolores Jiménez Hernández
Morocco	Mohamed Bentaja
Mozambique	
Netherlands	H. S. B. M. van Asperen, A. P. M. van der Zon, P. R. Schütz, A. Berghuizen, A. D. Adema
Pakistan	
Papua New Guinea	Dike ari, Edward Nir, Adam Jai Delaney
Peru	Augusto Freyre, Eduardo Pérez del Solar, Amalia Torres
Philippines	Jose D. Malvas, Jr., Bernarditas C. Muller, Ma. Theresa P. Lazaro

Poland	Edward Lenart, Kazimierz Rykowski
Russian Federation	Anatoliy I. Pisarenko
Saudi Arabia	
Senegal	
Spain	
Sweden	Astrid Bergquist, Michael Odevall, Svante Lundqvist, Ulrika Winroth, Reidar Persson, Christer Hermansson, Ulf Svensson, Jan Sandström, Stefan Wirtén
Switzerland	Philippe Roch, Monika Linn Locher, Heinz Wandeler, Andrea Semadeni, Pierre Muehlemann, Liliane Ortega, Norert Ledergerber, Claude-Georges Ducret, Pascale Morand Francis, Werner Hunziker, Theo Wiederkehr, Andri Bisaz, Manuela Jost Ernst, Franz Schmithuesen, Bernardo Zentilli, Urs Amstutz
Thailand	Sa-nguan Kakhong
Uganda	J. R. Kamugisha
Ukraine	Tatiana Hardashuk
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Martin Holdgate, David Bills, Andrew Bennett, Willie Sheridan, Mike Dudley, Bridget Campbell, John Hudson, Anthony Smith, Dawn Bentley, Elizabeth Jones, Robin Mortimer
United Republic of Tanzania	B. S. Kessy
United States of America	Mark G. Hambley, Stephanie Caswell, Mary J. Coulombe, Doug Kneeland, Franklin Moore, Robert McSwain, John Heissenbuttel, Harlan Cohen
Venezuela	Ióle Touron Lugo
Zimbabwe	P. C. Gondo

Non-member States and entities represented by observers

Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Costa Rica, Denmark, Ecuador, Greece, Honduras, Indonesia, Ireland, Kenya, Mauritania, Monaco, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Turkey, Uruguay, Zambia, European Commission

United Nations

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Environment Programme, Economic Commission for Europe

Specialized agencies

International Labour Organization, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, World Meteorological Organization

Intergovernmental organizations

Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

Non-governmental organizations

Category I	International Council of Women, World Wide Fund for Nature International
Category II	Greenpeace International, International Committee for European Security and Cooperation, International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), National Wildlife Federation
Roster or accredited to the Commission on Sustainable Development	Canadian Pulp and Paper Association, Caribbean Conservation Association, Centre for International Environmental Law, Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), Citizens' Alliance for Saving the Atmosphere and the Earth (CASA), Deutsche Naturschutzring (DNR), Environmental and Energy Study Institute, Friends of the Earth (FOE), Fundación Natura, Fundación Peruana para la Conservación de la Naturaleza, Green Earth Organization, Institut de recherche pour l'énergie, l'environnement et la construction, Instituto Sul-Mineiro de Estudios e de Conservçao de Natureza, International Institute for Sustainable Development, Netherlands National Committee for IUCN, Sierra Club, United Nations Association of Sweden in Stockholm, UNED-United Kingdom (UN Environment and Development-United Kingdom)

Annex II

DOCUMENTATION BEFORE THE PANEL AT ITS SECOND SESSION

The Panel had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on programme element I.2: Underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation (E/CN.17/IPF/1996/2);

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on programme element I.4: Fragile ecosystems affected by desertification, and the impact of airborne pollution on forests (E/CN.17/IPF/1996/3);

(c) Report of the Secretary-General on programme element I.5: Needs and requirements of countries with low forest cover (E/CN.17/IPF/1996/4);

(d) Report of the Secretary-General on programme element II (E/CN.17/IPF/1996/5);

(e) Report of the Secretary-General on programme element III.1 (a): Assessment of the multiple benefits of all types of forests (E/CN.17/IPF/1996/6);

(f) Report of the Secretary-General on programme element III.1 (b): Methodologies for proper valuation of the multiple benefits of forests (E/CN.17/IPF/1996/7);

(g) Report of the Secretary-General on programme element I.1: Progress in national forest and land-use plans (E/CN.17/IPF/1996/8);

(h) Report of the Secretary-General on programme element I.3: Traditional forest-related knowledge (E/CN.17/IPF/1996/9 and Corr.1);

(i) Report of the Secretary-General on programme element III.2: Criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management (E/CN.17/IPF/1996/10);

(j) Report of the Secretary-General on programme element IV (E/CN.17/IPF/1996/11);

(k) Report of the Secretary-General on programme element V.1 (E/CN.17/IPF/1996/12).

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Fourth session
18 April-3 May 1996

HIGH-LEVEL MEETING

Preparing for the 1997 special session of the General Assembly

Report of the Secretary-General

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INTRODUCTION

1. The General Assembly at its fiftieth session discussed the preparations for its special session for the purpose of an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21 1/ and encouraged participants at the high-level meeting of the Commission on Sustainable Development at its fourth session to address matters related to the special session. The high-level meeting could give direction to the special session by identifying, on a preliminary basis, substantive areas of priority concern, given the developments since Rio, within and outside the Commission on Sustainable Development. It could also discuss issues of process such as the link with the follow-up to other United Nations conferences, the making of national information exchange more fruitful, and suggestions for fully involving the private sector.

I. SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

2. At its current session, the Commission will complete the thematic work programme for 1993-1996. In the context of its work programme, the Commission has, in carrying out the tasks mandated to it, furthered the international agenda for achieving sustainable development and taken several initiatives that need to be followed up. The follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development has also taken place in several other intergovernmental forums. The illustrative list of issues, approaches and recommendations that follows attempts an overview of the achievements and an indication of the tasks ahead.

A. Freshwater

3. At its second session, the Commission addressed the declining quantity and quality of freshwater resources. 2/ Convinced that sound, integrated policies could be built only upon reliable data on the magnitude and underlying causes of the problem, the Commission decided to conduct a global water assessment. Preliminary results from the assessment indicate that a number of regions are already suffering from very severe shortages and that others will face a similar situation in the near future. Pollution problems are becoming widespread in all regions as a result of increasing industrialization, the expansion of urban areas and the indiscriminate use of agricultural chemicals. These preliminary results point to the need for major adaptations in production patterns, as well as regional and global cooperation to ensure food security and major efforts to control pollution.

4. The results of the global water assessment will be available in 1997. They may form the basis for internationally agreed strategies for demand-side management as part of an integrated water management approach.

B. Forests

5. At its third session, the Commission established the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests to develop a consensus on a number of priority issues related to sustainable forest management. 3/ The Panel's programme of work involves field application of a number of notions associated with sustainable development to a sector of significant socio-economic and environmental value both to the developing and to the developed countries that use forests for economic development as well as for meeting basic human needs. The Panel will complete its work in 1997.

6. Based on the outcome of that work, the need and direction for the further development of international agreements could be assessed.

C. Oceans and fisheries

7. An important outcome of UNCED was an integrated approach to ocean management. With the completion, since Rio, of the Washington Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities, 4/ the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks 5/ and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, 6/ together with the pre-existing London Dumping Convention (Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping Wastes and Other Matter), a set of international instruments has become available for the sustainable management of the oceans and marine ecosystems.

8. The current session of the Commission provides the opportunity to reassess the adequacy of management regimes for oceans and marine ecosystems, and arrangements for integration and coordination at the intergovernmental level, in inter-agency work and in science and research, including monitoring. It is also evident that, while many of the agreements have been concluded at the global level, implementation may be better addressed at the regional level. The nature of the regional arrangements that would ensure effective implementation of specific agreements and promote coordinated areas, issues and agreements needs to be considered.

D. Management of risks

9. The growing understanding of the need to manage the risks that are associated with the production and use of certain chemicals has contributed to further international cooperation on chemical safety issues. It may be recalled that the high-level meeting during the second session of the Commission, put forward as a possibility a ban on the export of domestically prohibited chemicals from Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries to other countries. 7/

10. The Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS), established in 1994, is mandated to seek consensus among Governments on the development of strategies for the implementation of chapter 19 of Agenda 21 and to undertake periodic reviews of these strategies. The Forum has been invited by the Commission on Sustainable Development to report on its work before the special session of the General Assembly in 1997.

11. The Forum has assigned a high priority to the improvement of information systems, an area in which considerable progress has been made. Negotiations on an internationally legally binding instrument for the application of the prior informed consent procedure for certain hazardous chemicals in international trade have been mandated.

12. The Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal has been strengthened by the agreement banning the exportation of hazardous wastes. The aforementioned 1972 London Dumping Convention for the prevention of marine pollution by waste dumping has been significantly strengthened by amendments in 1993 banning the dumping of radioactive, industrial and incineration wastes; a new protocol under discussion would ban all marine disposal except in specific cases that could be shown to have no adverse environmental impacts.

13. Persistent organic pollutants (POPs) have become an issue of increasing international concern, and this issue is only beginning to be adequately addressed in international initiatives. In May 1995, the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), in its decision 18/32 8/ invited the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC), working with the International Programme on Chemical Safety (IPCS) and IFCS, to initiate an assessment of POPs, beginning with those under discussion at the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), so as to consolidate existing information, develop criteria for identification of POPs and develop recommendations on international action, including a possible international legal mechanism.

14. The perceived risks for human health and the environment resulting from the production and use of chemicals, in particular those related to chlorine-based chemicals, will undoubtedly continue to be a major topic of international decision-making involving all stakeholders, consumers, industry, non-governmental organizations and Governments alike.

E. Atmosphere

15. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change 9/ was one of the key commitments to emerge from Rio and it has been ratified by more than 150 States. The Conference of the Parties to the Convention, at its first session, held in March-April 1995, established the Berlin Mandate 10/ process with a view to strengthening the current commitments of "annex 1" parties (namely, OECD countries and countries with economies in transition) to limiting greenhouse gas emissions and to setting commitments for the period beyond the year 2000.

16. The success achieved in addressing the problem of ozone layer depletion under the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and its fund described as having produced a model for dealing with atmosphere-related issues and for constructive cooperation among Governments, industry, science and non-governmental organizations.

17. Some success has been achieved in addressing transboundary air pollution in Europe, North America and South East Asia, but it remains a growing threat elsewhere in Asia, in South America and in southern Africa.

18. The health and environmental problems related to urban air pollution are becoming a growing concern that requires the increased sharing of experience with integrated approaches to the abatement and prevention of such pollution.

F. Land

19. The Convention on Biological Diversity 11/ was also opened for signature at Rio and is considered one of the cornerstone achievements of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). The Convention has been ratified by 145 States (as at 13 March 1996), and the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, in November-December 1994, adopted a multi-year programme of work for the period 1995-1997, 12/ subsequently revised and updated at the second session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention in November 1995. The importance of biological diversity as a cross-cutting issue is coming to the forefront in the international discussions on oceans and marine ecosystems and in the deliberations of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests.

20. The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, 13/ was opened for signature in October 1994 and has been ratified by 25 States (as at 13 March 1996). The Convention incorporates a number of innovative features, for example, action plans to combat desertification are placed in the context of strategies for sustainable development to be prepared with the full involvement of local communities. The first session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention will take place in September 1997.

21. The discussions on sustainable land management during the third session of the Commission on Sustainable Development showed the need for an integrated approach to land management, taking into account the increasing competition for land use for urban development and agricultural production. Further international action may be required to broaden the understanding of such an approach, and (given the seriousness of the problem) to secure a commitment to major changes in land-use planning.

G. Focus on the driving forces

22. The integration of environment and development is the central element of Agenda 21. In order to give more practical expression to this, the Commission decided at its third session to undertake specific work programmes on indicators for sustainable development, on changing consumption and production patterns and on technology transfer. These work programmes identify the core areas where action should be concentrated and will guide implementation and monitoring activities over a longer period. An important feature of all three work programmes is that they involve non-government actors. A major area of work for the Commission will be on the specific proposals that emerge from this work.

23. A closely related dimension is the integration of economics and environment in decision-making. In this area, the Commission pioneered discussions on the links between trade policy and sustainable development, a matter that is currently high in the agenda of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the World Trade Organization, and may now wish to send a specific message to the ministerial component of the ninth session of UNCTAD and to the Ministerial Conference meeting of the World Trade Organization in Singapore. It might, for example, wish to:

(a) Encourage UNCTAD at its ninth session to propose further strategies for the implementation of positive measures, at national and international levels, aimed at supporting developing countries in their efforts to move towards higher environmental standards, and particularly at mitigating short-term effects on competitiveness and effects on small-scale enterprises;

(b) Invite UNCTAD and UNEP jointly, in cooperation with the secretariats of relevant multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) to propose guidelines aimed at assisting MEA negotiations with a view to promoting sustainable development as well as compatibility between trade and environmental policies.

24. There are other, similar areas that could benefit from further discussions in the Commission, for example, the use of economic policy instruments to promote sustainability, and institutional arrangements for linking macroeconomic and sectoral development strategies with resource and environment management strategies.

H. Financial resources

25. In spite of some encouraging individual examples of the growth of official development assistance (ODA), as well as of some promising approaches towards mobilizing domestic and international resources for sustainable development identified and explored by the Commission through its Ad Hoc Inter-sessional Working Group on Finance, the overall picture in regard to the implementation of all the recommendations and commitments related to finance as contained in Agenda 21 remains an area of concern. Therefore, financial resources and mechanisms for sustainable development should continue to be seen as a priority both for the 1997 review and for the period beyond 1997. More specifically the Commission could discuss:

(a) Innovative ideas for augmenting the overall flow of resources to developing countries and economies in transition;

(b) Specific modalities for funding sustainable development strategies and projects formulated by developing countries and economies in transition in pursuance of Agenda 21;

(c) Arrangements for coordinated funding of joint programmes for international action formulated by international organizations.

I. Keeping the goal of sustainable development in view

26. The goal of sustainable development is to meet the needs of the present and the future. Hence the focus on driving forces, sectoral strategies, and resource management must be combined with the monitoring of the impact on levels of living (as measured by the incidence of poverty), quality of life, health and education status, environmental risks at the local, national and global level, and similar variables.

27. In the context of its discussion on sustainable development indicators, the high-level meeting may wish to consider how the goals of sustainable development can be kept in view as part of the monitoring process.

II. NEED FOR A SECTORAL PERSPECTIVE

28. The preliminary conclusion from the period 1992-1996 with regard to natural resources may be that most of the international frameworks for their sustainable management are in place or under development. More focus should now be given to addressing the driving forces that impact on them. Agenda 21 identifies them in its sections I (Social and economic dimensions) and III (Strengthening the role of major groups).

29. The crucial link between driving forces - economic growth and trade, consumption and production patterns and population growth - and resource management comprises the economic sectors that often define the way policy-making and implementation is organized. For example, the impact of demand growth and development on land resources is determined in large measure by agricultural policy and human settlement policy. To be truly effective, the Commission's consideration of resource management issues must be combined with an equal emphasis on sectoral policy development. For many sectors, like agriculture, fisheries, forestry, industry, human settlements and social services, there are existing forums in the United Nations system that deal with these matters. The impact of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and Agenda 21 on the work in these forums has helped to inject considerations of sustainability into their discussions. However, there are some gaps and, from the perspective of sustainability, the most obvious one relates to transport and energy.

30. The High-level Advisory Board on Sustainable Development considered the issue of transport at its fifth session (29-31 January 1996) and reached the following preliminary conclusions:

(a) The transport sector is of fundamental importance in national, regional and international strategies of sustainable development. Transportation issues which have hitherto been addressed primarily at the national and regional levels by intergovernmental bodies should now be given attention by an appropriate intergovernmental body at the international level;

(b) Greater international cooperation is also needed. In view of the strong international competition in automobile markets, and the relationship of national manufacturers to their government, effective action needs to be taken at the international level to develop more effective and stringent regulatory frameworks, such as internationally agreed standards for air quality, motor vehicle emissions and fuel economy, at least among OECD countries. Similarly, fiscal and pricing mechanisms for restraining transport demand, especially fuel or energy taxes, need to be implemented or coordinated at the international level.

31. The Board intends to continue its discussion on the transport sector in the context of its preparations for 1997.

32. At its second session, the Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and on Energy for Development (12-23 February 1996) stressed the crucial role of energy in economic and social development and environmentally sound development. It underscored the need to evolve strategies and programmes to ensure a sustainable regime for energy supply and consumption in the twenty-first century. At the same time, it noted that, at this stage, a holistic and concerted approach among the organizations of the United Nations system to the assessment, development, utilization and management of energy resources is lacking.

33. The high-level meeting may wish to consider how the sectoral perspective can be introduced into the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development so that the integration of environment and development is effectively reflected in its work.

III. ISSUES OF PROCESS

34. The follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development has involved many innovations in the United Nations process - the high level of participation in the Commission on Sustainable Development, the strong inter-agency process, the extensive inter-sessional activity, the arrangements for follow-up at the national level and the organized involvement of non-governmental organizations; but in the light of experience, the high-level meeting of the Commission may wish to examine the links with follow-up to other United Nations conferences, the link between international and national follow-up and measures to strengthen the involvement of the private sector.

A. Links with other conferences

35. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development was the first in the present cycle of global conferences; and Agenda 21, adopted by the Conference, has a broad sweep which includes many areas, like trade and development, demographic developments, poverty, and the role of women in development, that were covered more extensively in subsequent conferences. The same will be true for the issues of human settlement after the forthcoming United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and for some issues relating to sustainable agriculture and land management after the forthcoming World Food Summit. Hence the follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development has to be seen as part of a broader process that seeks to bring together the follow-up to all United Nations global conferences.

36. The high-level meeting of the Commission may wish to consider the particular role of the Commission regarding issues that are being pursued in some depth elsewhere as part of the follow-up to subsequent conferences.

B. National follow-up

37. Over 100 countries have established national environment plans or national strategies for sustainable development; these include environmentally oriented development plans, such as those increasingly sponsored by the multilateral lending agencies, and integrated approaches to greening the policies of industrialized countries. The key challenge recognized by policy officials involved with these plans is in translating their objectives into feasible implementation measures. Monitoring progress in terms of outcome (environmental and socio-economic improvement) rather than process (design and publication of plans) remains elusive in the majority of countries.

38. In the four years since the establishment of the Commission, 73 countries and 10 regional organizations have provided information on follow-up activities related to Agenda 21 since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. Since the third session of the Commission, oral presentations by selected countries, followed by discussion, have supplemented the written reports.

39. At the recommendation of the General Assembly, the United Nations Secretariat is preparing, for the special session of the Assembly in 1997, country profiles that are based on information received through national reporting and from other official United Nations channels. That each chapter of Agenda 21 is to be summarized in a two-page format will result in a fairly succinct country profile for each reporting country. The profile will focus on progress made and constraints encountered in implementing Agenda 21, supported by statistics, wherever available.

40. The high-level meeting may wish to consider how the role of the Commission as a platform for exchange of national experiences can be strengthened.

C. Role of the private sector

41. As a result of environmental regulation, private investment expenditure for environmental protection has significantly increased in many countries. For example, in OECD countries in the past decade, private investment for environmental protection increased both in absolute terms and as a percentage of gross national product (GNP). A significant increase in private sector investment for environmental protection also occurred in the newly industrialized developing countries, while in economies in transition a marked increase is expected in the future, in particular in economies with a rapid rate of privatization of industries.

42. In the years to come, it will be necessary to increase the share of private investment in environmental protection and sustainable development because of the tight budget constraints in most countries. Furthermore, the flow of ODA to developing countries remains below the United Nations agreed target of 0.7 per cent of GNP in most of the donor countries.

43. It is evident that industry has a major role to play in achieving sustainable industrial development, and there are encouraging signs that industry is taking this responsibility seriously, partly because of the growth of environmental legislation and growing environmental awareness. Besides, new partnerships between Governments and business are developing as environmental policy for industry becomes focused less on regulation and control, and more on cooperation and incentives.

44. At this stage, the high-level meeting may wish to take stock of the discussions that will take place during the current session of the Commission on private investments (in the context of the discussion on financial resources and technology transfer) and on the contribution of business and industry to sustainable development (in the context of the Day of the Workplace) and to provide further policy guidance.

45. The high-level meeting may also wish to consider whether industry and sustainable industrial development should have a more identifiable place in the agenda of the Commission on Sustainable Development beyond 1997.

Notes

1/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I, Resolutions Adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

2/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1994, Supplement No. 13 (E/1994/33/Rev.1), chap. I, sect. D.3.

3/ Ibid., 1995, Supplement No. 12 (E/1995/32), chap. I, sect. D, para. 204 and annex I.

4/ Document UNEP (OCA)/LBA/IG.2/7.

5/ Document A/50/550, annex I; see also A/CONF.164/37.

6/ Report of the Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Twenty-eighth Session, Rome, 20-31 October 1995 (C 95/REP) (Rome, FAO, 1995), appendix I.

7/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1994, Supplement No. 13 (E/1994/33/Rev.1), chap. II, para. 11.

8/ See document A/50/25, annex, decision 18/32.

9/ Document A/AC.237/18 (Part II)/Add.1 and Corr.1, annex I.

10/ Document FCCC/CP/1995/7/Add.1, chap. I, decision 1/CP.1.

11/ See United Nations Environment Programme, Convention on Biological Diversity (Environmental Law and Institutions Programme Activity Centre), June 1992.

12/ See document E/CN.17/1995/27, annex, para. 4.

13/ Document A/49/84/Add.2, annex, appendix II.

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REVIEW OF SECTORAL CLUSTERS: PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS MADE BY THE COMMISSION AT ITS SECOND AND THIRD SESSIONS

Progress in the implementation of the decisions and recommendations made by the Commission at its third session

Report of the Secretary-General

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Commission on Sustainable Development, at its second session, requested the Secretary-General to keep it informed of the action taken and progress achieved in the implementation of the decisions and recommendations taken at its previous sessions.

2. The present report focuses on sectoral clusters of Agenda 21 1/ that were reviewed by the Commission, at its third session, in 1995, 2/ namely:

(a) Integrated approach to the planning and management of land resources;

(b) Combating deforestation;

(c) Managing fragile ecosystems: combating desertification and drought;

(d) Managing fragile ecosystems: sustainable mountain development;

(e) Promoting sustainable agriculture and rural development;

(f) Conservation of biological diversity;

(g) Environmentally sound management of biotechnology.

This report has been prepared on the basis of inputs from entities within the United Nations system, acting as the task managers for their respective chapters of Agenda 21, specifically the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). These inputs were drafted in consultation with other interested agencies and organizations. This report mainly addresses action taken so far at the international level. More detailed information and analysis of action taken and progress achieved at the national and other levels, as well as by major groups, will be presented within the context of the 1997 comprehensive review of the implementation of Agenda 21.

3. As for the thematic areas of Agenda 21 that were reviewed by the Commission during its second session 3/ - namely, health, human settlements and freshwater, and toxic chemicals and hazardous wastes - information on progress in the implementation of relevant decisions and recommendations of the Commission taken at that session was submitted to the third session of the Commission in 1995 in document E/CN.17/1995/22. That information will be updated in the context of the reports to be prepared for the above-mentioned 1997 review.

I. CHAPTER 10 OF AGENDA 21: INTEGRATED APPROACH TO THE PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF LAND RESOURCES

4. The report on chapter 10 of Agenda 21 for the third session of the Commission on Sustainable Development was prepared on the basis of the report of FAO as task manager. An International Workshop on an Integrated Approach to Planning and Management of Land: Operationalization of Chapter 10 of Agenda 21, held in Wageningen, the Netherlands, 20-22 February 1995 (see document

E/CN.17/1995/33), was convened by the Government of the Netherlands in collaboration with FAO as an additional input to the discussions of the Commission on Sustainable Development at its third session. A number of case-studies presented at the workshop are contained in a forthcoming joint publication to be issued by the Government of the Netherlands and FAO.

Convening of workshops and consultations

5. As a follow-up to the recommendations of the Commission on Sustainable Development at its second session, concerning chapter 18 of Agenda 21, and to the recommendations of the Commission at its third session, the Governments of Israel and Japan, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Arid Land Consortium, convened in Israel an International Symposium on Sustainable Water Management in Arid and Semi-Arid Lands, from 15-19 May 1995. The Symposium dealt with issues related to water management in these areas and with the interrelationship between land and water management.

Guidelines for planning for the sustainable development of land resources

6. FAO, under a project funded by UNEP, organized in Rome in June 1995 a workshop to develop an improved approach to land management. The output of the workshop, in the form of a short information document entitled Our Land, Our Future, will be published by FAO in the near future. In addition, guidelines for a more detailed and comprehensive approach to planning for sustainable management of land resources were prepared by a group of consultants and discussed at an informal expert meeting organized by FAO in November 1995 in order to consider the draft guidelines. These guidelines will need to be amplified and upgraded in the light of further thinking and field experience. Other workshops for representatives of developing countries on related subjects have also been organized by the European Community, in Bologna, Italy, and by UNEP in Nairobi, Kenya, and Lima, Peru.

Action at the national level

7. A number of countries have expressed interest in the application and further development of the guidelines for a detailed and comprehensive approach to the planning for the sustainable management of land resources. A project for the application of the guidelines in Sierra Leone is in an advanced state of preparation and 25 other countries have expressed interest in the project.

Internationally acceptable approach to the classification of land use and land cover

8. A considerable programme has been built up to develop an internationally acceptable approach to the classification of land use and land cover in collaboration with UNEP, the Environmental Information Management Unit/Sustainable Development Department (SDDR) of FAO, the International Institute for Aerospace Survey and Sciences (ITC) (Netherlands), the Institute for Terrestrial Ecology (ITE) (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) and Eurostat (Statistical Office of the European Communities). This involved a large contract with ITE that will lead to substantial outputs by early 1996, the

finalization of a land-use database and the development of a prototype land cover database by ITC, and valuable inputs into the FAO Africover project. At the same time, an informal information network was developed that now includes regular circular letters to several hundreds of correspondents, and discussion. The overall activity has led to useful progress in concept development and agreement among institutions. There is likely to be a follow-up to the present UNEP funding to support land use and cover classification. This may include workshops at the regional level. It is also hoped that the FAO Africover project will become a vehicle for further concept development and methodology dissemination.

II. CHAPTER 11 OF AGENDA 21: COMBATING DEFORESTATION

The IPF process

9. The Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests, created following the recommendation of the Commission on Sustainable Development at its third session, 4/ held its first session from 11 to 15 September 1995 in New York and its second session from 11 to 22 March 1996 in Geneva.

10. The progress report of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests is being submitted as a separate document to the Commission at its fourth session (document E/CN.17/1996/32). To facilitate cross references with the work of the Panel, progress under the Panel's various "issues for priority action" is reported below.

Progress under issue I: implementation of decisions of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development

11. In general, the progress reported to the Commission at its third session with regard to adjusting policies, legislation and institutions to achieve greater balance between environment and development and to adapt them to the implementation of Agenda 21 has continued. Pilot programmes to test or demonstrate sustainable forest management practice have continued. In developing countries in particular, national forest programmes have been critically reviewed and better adapted to the principles of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. In the current difficult economic climate, a regrettable aspect is the difficulty in mobilizing commitment, both domestic and international, for actions that combine development and environment goals.

12. Efforts to promote environmentally friendly harvesting (logging) have continued; the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) and the FAO Model Codes of Harvesting Practice continue to serve as a basis for some specific codes. A possible regional harvesting code for all of Asia and the Pacific is among the issues of sustainable forest management slated to be considered by an ad hoc Working Group established by the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission in January 1996.

13. Given the importance of forests for biological diversity, efforts continue to be made in the field of conservation of genetic resources in protected areas and forests. Preparations are under way for an international conference on

protected areas and sustainable rural development, possibly as a satellite meeting to the eleventh World Forestry Congress in Turkey (October 1997). As called for by the Commission on Sustainable Development at its third session, greater importance is being given by the Convention on Biological Diversity 5/ to forest issues, and FAO, the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources-World Conservation Union (IUCN), WCMC and the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI) are cooperating to promote in situ and ex situ conservation of forest genetic resources. FAO, in close collaboration with national institutes, is developing a worldwide information system on forest genetic resources with the objective of making available reliable and up-to-date information in this field, to be used for planning and decision-making and to underpin programmes at national, regional and global levels.

Progress under issue II: international cooperation; finance and technology

14. Statistics show that external funding in support of sustainable forest management and national forestry programmes is declining. It must be kept in mind, however, that forest-related activities as part of rural development or environment or resource management programmes may not be included in those statistics.

15. However, regional initiatives continue to strengthen inter-country cooperation in forestry, for example, those under the Amazon Cooperation Treaty, the Consejo Centroamericano de Bosques y Areas Protegidas (Central American Council of Forests and Protected Areas), the South Pacific Forum and the Ministerial Conferences on the Protection of Forests in Europe.

Progress under issue III: forest assessments, criteria and indicators, valuation

16. The country capacity-building programme coordinated by FAO has continued to receive donor support. Preparations are well advanced for the updating of global resource data in the year 2000; in line with the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, this future assessment will better cover both environment and productive potentials of forests.

17. On criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management, the Montreal and Helsinki processes continue, as does the initiative of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty as reflected in the Torapoto Statement of February 1995. In addition, progress has been made in involving countries that hitherto were largely bypassed by major initiatives. Meetings have been held or are planned on criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management (FAO/UNEP for dry-zone Africa, Nairobi, November 1995; for the Near East, Cairo, October 1996; and for Central America, late 1996); for the international contact group on criteria and indicators (Government of Finland, Helsinki, August 1996); and on sustainable forest management (FAO/ITTO for Asia, Bangkok, December 1995). The Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) has been undertaking testing of field-level criteria and indicators both in temperate and in tropical countries.

18. Many countries and international organizations are involved in studies to develop improved valuation of the full range of forest goods and services and to better integrate forests into national accounts.

Progress under issue IV: trade and environment

19. Environmental pressure groups have sought to include many tropical timber species under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) restrictions, and a review process on this continues; certification systems accompanied by various forms of ecological labelling are being adopted by an increasing number of major timber exporting countries; and more agencies have been endorsed to carry out certification of forest products. Efforts continue to recycle a greater proportion of waste paper and other wood residues: this trend is being encouraged by policies and incentives fostered by the trade and environment dialogue.

Progress under issue V: international organizations and instruments

20. There have been no major changes in the mandates and activities of the major intergovernmental institutions involved in forestry. A greater commitment to cooperation has surfaced, however, and is reflected in the very close, even if informal, collaboration among most international agencies in providing support to the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests process. Also, what has proved mutually beneficial and evolved into a normal modus operandi is the tripartite arrangement linking United Nations organizations with bilateral partnerships of developed and developing country Governments in order to sponsor United Nations Conference on Environment and Development-related dialogue initiatives.

Activities by major groups

21. Non-governmental organizations, particularly international environmental groups, continue to be very active in the international forest policy dialogue. A prominent non-governmental initiative has been the launching of the World Commission on Forests and Sustainable Development which has started a series of public regional hearings (the first in Jakarta, Indonesia, March 1996) on the agenda established by the Commission on Sustainable Development at its third session for the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests. Some trade organizations, such as the Association technique internationale des bois tropicaux, are encouraging their members to become associated more extensively with ongoing initiatives. Furthermore, the commercial private sector, while not prominently involved in international dialogue, has adopted many self-enforced codes of environmental responsibility and best practice in forest management, forest products harvesting and processing, and pollution management.

III. CHAPTER 12 OF AGENDA 21: MANAGING FRAGILE ECOSYSTEMS: COMBATING DESERTIFICATION AND DROUGHT

United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa

22. The process surrounding the ratification and implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, 6/ has remained high in the agenda since the Convention was adopted in June 1994. As regards furthering the Convention process and keeping its momentum alive, the seventh and eighth sessions of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for the Elaboration of an International Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, took place in August 1995 and February 1996 respectively; at those sessions, administrative matters and funding mechanisms and scientific and technological cooperation, as well as the preparation for the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, were discussed. The total number of signatories to the Convention as of 27 March 1996 was 115, with 27 having ratified. It is hoped that the first session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention will take place in 1997.

Urgent action for Africa

23. In relation to resolution 5/1 on urgent action for Africa, adopted by the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee at its fifth session, 7/ consultations organized cooperatively have considered the implementation process for the Convention in all subregions. Aspects considered included funding, through national desertification funds, country-level division of labour, especially between government institutions and non-governmental organizations, and subregional and regional implementation strategies. National-level discussions have focused on desertification funds and national action programmes.

Other actions, other regions and division of labour

24. Countries in the other regions have also been planning activities for national, subregional and regional implementation of the Convention and establishing appropriate mechanisms. An ongoing campaign to raise awareness of the different parties on the Convention is the most prominent action taking place currently in various parts of the world led by the secretariat of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee. Planning meetings organized by the International Non-Governmental Organization Network on Desertification for Latin America and Asia and the high-level seminar on regional implementation for Governments in the Latin American region show the increased attention being paid to the Convention not only by technically oriented people but also by decision makers and affected groups (non-governmental organizations).

25. Non-governmental organizations and major groups have been increasingly involved in the planning stages of Convention implementation, at the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee, subregional and national levels, prior to implementation through community channels.

Information on desertification

26. The fact remains that knowledge and information on desertification are still inadequate and poorly distributed. In an attempt to ensure better use and awareness of existing scientific knowledge, preparations have begun for the publication of a revised Atlas of Desertification. An increased focus is also being placed on work to collect and disseminate knowledge of successful techniques of land management and coping strategies used by communities throughout drylands.

27. In terms of placing a greater focus on assessment and research related to dryland ecosystems, major multi-partner research initiatives have been started, for example, the Desert margins initiative (by the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)) in sub-Saharan Africa and the interregional "People, land management and environmental change" project (by United Nations University). Both will form part of the scientific and technical cooperation on land degradation, as also required under the Convention. Studies on establishing the links between desertification and other environmental problems, for example, work on climate change and desertification involving carbon sequestration, are progressing.

IV. CHAPTER 13 OF AGENDA 21: MANAGING FRAGILE ECOSYSTEMS: SUSTAINABLE MOUNTAIN DEVELOPMENT

Convening of regional consultations

28. In accordance with the recommendation of the Commission on Sustainable Development related to chapter 13 of Agenda 21, according to which the Commission urged interested Governments and organizations, including the private sector, to promote initiatives aimed at raising awareness, including the convening of regional and intergovernmental consultations, 8/ FAO, in its role as task manager, has initiated, in cooperation with host countries and concerned organizations, the convening of several such meetings:

(a) In Asia: the regional intergovernmental consultation, entitled "Sustainable development of fragile mountain areas of Asia", was held in Kathmandu, Nepal, 13-15 December 1994;

(b) In Latin America: the regional intergovernmental consultation on sustainable mountain development took place in Lima, Peru, 8-11 August 1995;

(c) In Europe: the organizational processes began in 1995 for (i) the European intergovernmental consultation on sustainable mountain development, which is scheduled in two sessions for 1996, the first in Aviemore, Scotland, 23-26 April, and the second in Trento, Italy, during the week of 7 October and (ii) the European non-governmental organization consultation on sustainable mountain development, to be held in Toulouse, France, 4-6 July 1996;

(d) In Africa: the regional intergovernmental consultation on sustainable mountain development will be held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 3-7 June 1996.

New institutional arrangements at global and regional levels

29. Following the outcome of the Non-Governmental Organization Consultation on the Mountain Agenda, held in Lima, Peru, in February 1995, an Initial Organizing Committee meeting was held in West Virginia, United States of America, in September 1995 to establish the Mountain Forum, a network intended to include interested non-governmental organizations and governmental organizations, the purpose of which is to provide a forum for mutual support and the exchange of ideas and experiences among people with respect to raising mountain-related issues in local, national and international agendas and to promote policies and actions for equitable and ecologically sustainable mountain development. 9/

Guidelines for preparation of sustainable mountain development programmes

30. A broad-based collaborative effort is under way to develop a set of guidelines for sustainable development in mountain areas, focusing on national-level planning needs. This activity is based on work initiated by the task manager for chapter 13 of Agenda 21, involving the inter-agency network on mountains. The work is continuing in a fully collaborative manner, involving Governments, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations, with The Mountain Institute, in its current capacity as convener of the Interim Facilitating Committee of the Mountain Forum, having been designated to coordinate the formulation of guidelines. Existing guidelines for national-level planning in forestry, environment, conservation and other areas are being taken fully into account to avoid duplicating efforts where adequate planning tools already exist. This work is therefore intended to be complementary to existing guidelines by addressing planning needs specific to mountain development issues. Such effort is expected to facilitate formulation of comprehensive national and/or local mountain development programmes.

Action at national level

31. The regional intergovernmental consultations held for Asia and Latin America have served to reaffirm the commitment of the Governments of these regions to giving greater emphasis at the national level to the promotion of sustainable mountain development and the need to initiate new action in priority fields identified in both global and regional forums. Proposals have already been made at country level for project support aimed at strengthening institutional capacity to carry out mountain development; at assessing and monitoring the flow of resources to and from mountain areas; and at reducing poverty levels among mountain communities through income-generating activities.

Criteria and indicators of sustainable mountain development

32. FAO, as the task manager for chapter 13 of Agenda 21, has prepared a draft list of indicators for sustainable mountain development, within the framework of the programme on sustainable development indicators adopted by the Commission on Sustainable Development. Further work in this area is expected to include a wide range of inputs from other international organizations and Governments.

V. CHAPTER 14 OF AGENDA 21: PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Studies and guidelines

33. FAO has developed a draft outline for a study on the implications for sustainable agriculture and rural development (SARD) of the Final Act Embodying the Results of the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations 10/ at national, regional and international levels. Given the difficulty in locating well-qualified consultants for this task, the recognition of the cost considerations, and the existence of much material within FAO, work on the study will be undertaken by FAO staff in the first three to four months of 1996. The draft will be circulated to other interested agencies and institutions for their comments, with the aim of completing the report towards the end of the year.

34. The World Food Summit, to be held in November 1996, will have before it two technical reports addressing environmental issues within the context of food security: one on food production and environmental impact, and the other on lessons from the green revolution - towards a new green revolution.

Convening of conferences, workshops and consultations

35. In the area of integrated plant nutrition management, FAO and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) held a Workshop on Plant Nutrition Management, Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture to 2020, on 16 and 17 May 1995, emphasizing the exploitation of local sources of fertilizer materials as well as the recycling of organic materials, as key parts of plant nutrition strategies of developing countries, particularly in Africa.

36. Following the decision of the Conference of FAO at its twenty-eighth session in November 1995 to broaden the mandate of the Commission on Plant Genetic Resources to encompass that of a Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, there will be a step-by-step process with animal genetic resources marking the first step towards an intergovernmentally broadened Commission to begin a programme of work on animal genetic resources.

37. In the areas of plant genetic resources, the year 1996 will mark the holding of the fourth International Technical Conference on Plant Genetic Resources (Leipzig, Germany, June 1996). Eleven subregional meetings have been held in recent months with the participation of 154 Governments and numerous non-governmental organizations and other institutions. Work is advanced on preparing the two main documents for the Conference: the report on the state of the world's plant genetic resources and the global plan of action.

38. In addition, FAO in collaboration with Winrock International, held an International Workshop on the Integration of SARD Issues in Agricultural Policy from 22 to 24 May 1995 at FAO headquarters, Rome, Italy. The workshop centred on a paper that (a) analysed agricultural policies and the planning process in relation to economic adjustment in developing countries; (b) discussed key issues in natural resource management and environmental protection for SARD in those countries and (c) based on these analyses, developed a methodological and operational framework for integrating environmental and sustainable development considerations into the mainstream of agricultural planning and policy analysis.

Other papers explored the conceptual or operational issues and implications for training. The proceedings of this Workshop will be published shortly.

Indicators for sustainable agriculture and rural development

39. Work has intensified in developing indicators for SARD. A set of 41 methodology sheets on how to calculate indicator values has been prepared for the land resources cluster of chapters of Agenda 21; of these, 13 are directly related to chapter 14. This exercise supports the work of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat on indicators and information for decision-making (chap. 40), as follow-up to the decision of the Commission on Sustainable Development at its third session on a work programme on indicators for sustainable development.

40. Several international meetings have been organized by the World Bank and FAO to develop land quality indicators (LQIs) that can be tested in selected field projects. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has finalized its eight agro-environmental indicators and will begin their selected testing in 1996. FAO organized a meeting in January 1996 to discuss issues related to developing integrated LQIs. Issues included analytical frameworks, data quality, user groups, data aggregation, scale of analysis and indicator selection. It is hoped that integrated sets of LQIs may be identified and that the conceptual frameworks within which they can be applied, including institutional and decision-making elements, may be further developed.

41. FAO is continuing its efforts to develop mechanisms for community control over natural resources, particularly in the area of pastoralism, community forestry and artisanal fisheries. Indicators of participatory management are being developed. There has been a recent specific initiative to design a FAO/non-governmental organization cooperation programme providing capacity-building support to rural people's organizations in sustainable agriculture and food security. The programme aims to help these organizations fill development roles that are becoming increasingly complex as a result of changes such as structural adjustment, liberalization of markets and decentralization of administration and of natural resource management.

Action at the national level

42. With regard to efforts to develop participatory mechanisms, a mission was mounted in late 1995 to visit various Sahelian rural people's organizations, with a focus on the Fédération des ONG sénégalaises (FONGS). A two-day debriefing workshop for this mission was held in Rome on 4 and 5 December 1995 to bring together the mission members, staff from FAO, other Rome-based United Nations bodies (the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the World Food Programme (WFP)), the European Union and the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), and representatives of Sahelian and European non-governmental organizations.

43. A similar FAO programme funded by Northern non-governmental organizations is under way in South Asia aimed at building the capacity of people's organizations, particularly those relating to women, so as to incorporate SARD

into their activities. A consultation is planned to be held in the spring of 1996 to exchange views and experiences.

44. With regard to the promotion of integrated pesticide management (IPM), FAO's field programme is continuing under a variety of funding initiatives and with a range of bilateral and multilateral partners. With an initial focus on rice in Asia, the programme is expanding to cover other crops such as cotton, vegetables, grain, legumes, bananas and citrus fruits, and other regions, under the guidance of the FAO/UNEP Panel of Experts on IPM. Another initiative has been the launching, since the third session of the Commission, of an IPM Facility between the World Bank and FAO, with UNEP and UNDP likely to join as partners in the Facility in the near future. The overall aim is to have more and higher-quality IPM investment projects.

45. FAO plans to launch a global initiative for the management of animal genetic resources in early 1996 having a country-based structure for designing, implementing and maintaining action plans or strategies on animal genetic resources with the direct involvement of Governments, together with a global information system (DAD-IS) that involves unique databases and other research and training modules.

VI. CHAPTER 15 OF AGENDA 21: CONSERVATION OF BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

46. The Convention on Biological Diversity is emerging as the principal mechanism for advancing the objectives of chapter 15 of Agenda 21 on conservation of biological diversity by using the ecosystem approach, strengthening its internal capacity to utilize the knowledge and expertise available worldwide and seeking to ensure that the conservation and sustainable use of biological resources are mainstreamed into current economic activities.

47. The Convention is now entering its second phase under which emphasis is shifting towards national implementation. This transition is illustrated by the practical nature of the decisions taken by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention at its second session, held in Jakarta, Indonesia, in November 1995 and their emphasis on policy guidance. The meeting adopted the Jakarta Mandate on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine and Coastal Biological Diversity which proposes a framework programme for global action. 11/

48. The Conference of the Parties to the Convention at its second session also invited UNEP, subject to the availability of funds, to liaise with the Commission on Sustainable Development in order to organize an open-ended ad hoc intergovernmental workshop on the study of the relationship between the Convention on Biological Diversity and other international conventions on related issues. Consultations are in progress between the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat and UNEP regarding the modalities for convening such a meeting including dates, venue, provisional agenda and relevant documents.

49. The ecosystem-based approach was accompanied by the establishment of the clearing-house mechanism to promote technical and scientific cooperation. The adoption by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention of the main

proposals of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) which held its first meeting in Paris in September 1995 demonstrated the relevance and effectiveness of the current organs of the Convention. The Convention is evolving as a policy guidance body that seeks to promote action through existing institutions. This is illustrated by the focus of the decisions on framework programmes and guidance statements. The ability of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention to monitor the implementation of the Convention will be enhanced through the analysis of national reports submitted by parties from 1997 on and the periodic production of the Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO).

50. To date, 143 States have ratified the Convention and are at various stages of implementation of its provisions (compared with 89 States in April 1995).

51. The secretariat of the Convention is working with relevant United Nations entities such as UNEP, FAO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UNDP and the World Bank and international non-governmental organizations such as IUCN and World Wildlife Fund (WWF) in organizing training activities and regional meetings aimed at capacity-building and human resources development on the subject of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use.

52. The secretariat in collaboration with these bodies is exploring means for coordinating relevant global and regional agreements related to the Convention and establishing effective cooperation mechanisms. The coordination between the Convention and the FAO International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and the work of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests are noteworthy in this regard. The secretariat has also concluded a memorandum of cooperation with the Ramsar Convention on wetlands.

53. As a cooperative activity among UNEP, World Resources Institute (WRI) and IUCN, a set of guidelines on the preparation of biodiversity strategies and action plans was prepared and global biodiversity forums were organized to assist Governments in integrating biodiversity components in improving the understanding of the role of biodiversity in sustainable development and in monitoring implementation and the reporting of progress made.

54. Many United Nations entities and non-governmental organizations have strengthened their activities on the economics of biological diversity so as to contribute to the development of economic instruments supportive of the implementation of the objectives of chapter 15 of Agenda 21 and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

VII. CHAPTER 16 OF AGENDA 21: ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND MANAGEMENT OF BIOTECHNOLOGY

55. The Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, at its second session, decided to establish a negotiation process to develop, in the field of the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms, a protocol on biosafety, specifically focusing on transboundary movement of any living modified organism resulting from modern biotechnology that may have adverse effect on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity,

setting out for consideration, in particular, an appropriate procedure for advance informed agreement. The Conference of the Parties to the Convention also decided to establish an Open-ended Ad Hoc Group of Experts on Biosafety, which is to endeavour to complete its work in 1998. The Conference of the Parties to the Convention noted, inter alia, that guidelines on biosafety, including the proposed UNEP International Technical Guidelines on Safety in Biotechnology, may be used as an interim mechanism during the development of the protocol and to complement it after its completion, for the purposes of facilitating the development of national capacities to assess and manage risks, establish adequate information systems and develop expert human resources in biotechnology. 12/

Notes

1/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I, Resolutions Adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

2/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1995, Supplement No. 12 (E/1995/32).

3/ Ibid., 1994, Supplement No. 13 (E/1994/33/Rev.1).

4/ Ibid., 1995, Supplement No. 12 (E/1995/32), chap. I, sect. D, annex I.

5/ See United Nations Environment Programme, Convention on Biological Diversity (Environmental Law and Institutions Programme Activity Centre), June 1992.

6/ A/49/84/Add.2, annex, appendix II.

7/ Ibid., appendix III, sect. A, resolution 5/1.

8/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1995, Supplement No. 12 (E/1995/32), chap. I, sect. D, para. 199.

9/ See the report of the Initial Organizing Committee of the Mountain Forum, held at Spruce Knob Mountain Center, West Virginia, United States of America, 21-25 September 1995.

10/ See Legal Instruments Embodying the Results of the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations, done at Marrakesh on 15 April 1994 (GATT secretariat publication, Sales No. GATT/1994-7), vols. 1 and 27-31.

11/ See the report of the second session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (unedited draft) (UNEP/CBD/COP/2/19), decision II/10.

12/ Ibid., decision II/5.